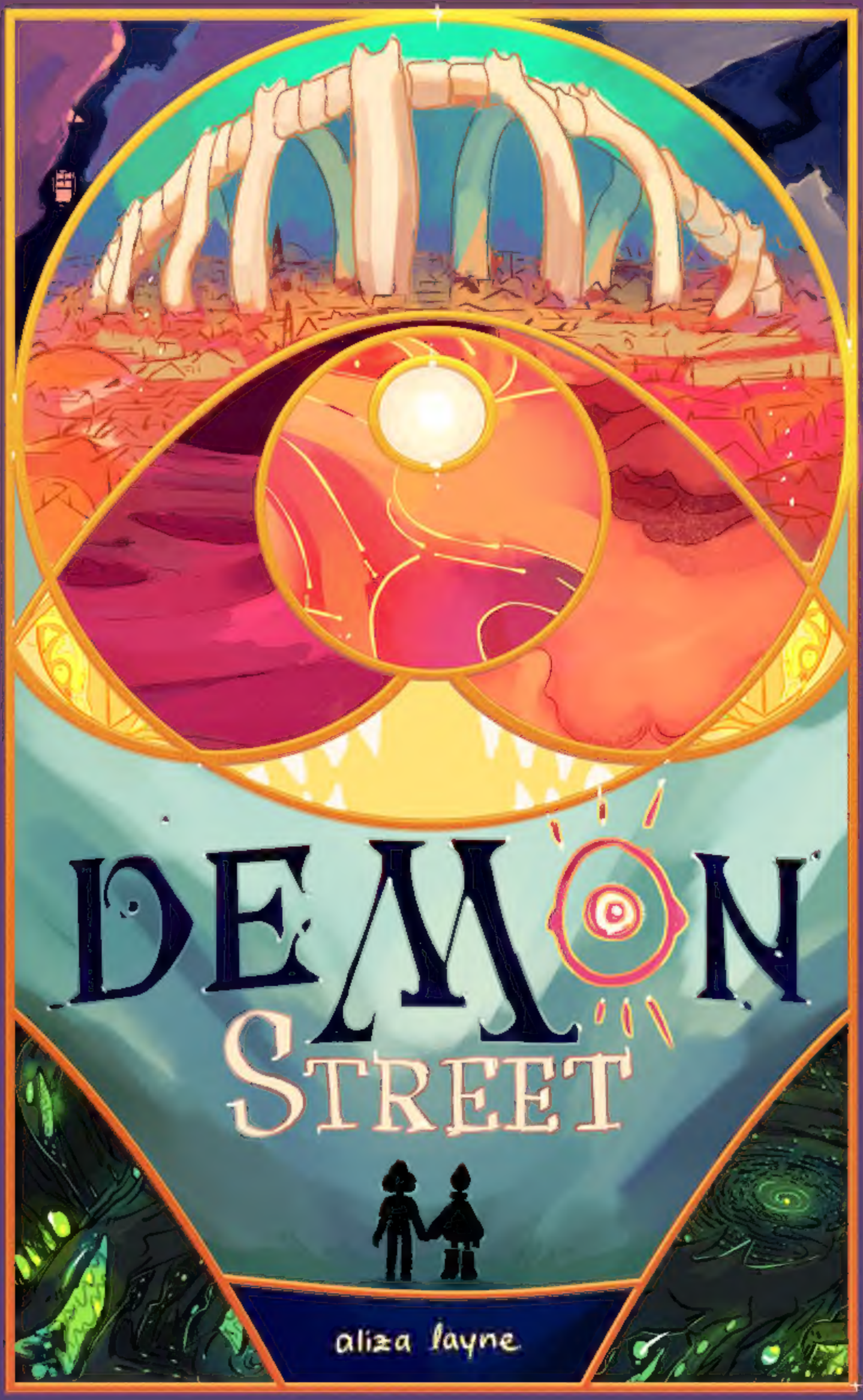
KATE AND I DIDN'T EXACTLY FIND AN ENTRANCE... MORE LIKE, THE STREET CAME TO US.


DEMON
STREET
aliza layne

MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME NOT TO GO TO DEMON STREET

IT JUST APPEARED ONE DAY. NO ONE KNOWS WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PEOPLE THAT LIVED THERE BEFORE.

MON ST

INSTEAD OF TRYING TO GET RID OF THE DEMONS, PEOPLE JUST STARTED CLOSING THE WAY UP WITH THEIR TRASH.

MOST PEOPLE JUST IGNORE IT. REALLY

EXCEPT ME

HM.

I CANT BELIEVE THAT WAS THE ONLY WAY IN... JEEEEEEEEEE

HEY KID!

YEAH?
YUP.
HOW DUMB D'YOU THINK I AM?
YOU HUMAN?
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
I DUNNO, PRETTY DUMB.
YOU MUST BE LOST, KID.

I'M NOT LOST, I'M HERE ON PURPOSE.

WHY?

I JUST WANNA SEE WHAT'S OUT HERE, I GUESS.

HOW LOVELY

YEAH. IT SURE IS

WAIT...SO I'M THE FIRST HUMAN TO COME DOWN HERE?

AS FAR AS I KNOW!

KICK KICK KICK

BURY

LET ME SHOW YOU AROUND!

SPLENDID

OK I GUESS

NOW THAT YOU HAVE CROSSED INTO OUR WORLD YOU SHOULD BE MADE AWARE OF THE MANY, MANY, MANY, MANY RULES WHICH GOVERN MY HOME AND ALL THE DEEPLY MEANINGFUL AND SPECIFIC COMPLIANCES I REQUIRE FROM ANYONE WHO MIGHT CROSS OVER THE BORDER BETWEEN WORLDS, OF COURSE THESE DO NOT APPLY TO ME BUT THEY MOST CERTAINLY APPLY TO YOU, I HAVE NOT ACTUALLY SEEN ANYONE ELSE CROSS OVER SO I MUST ADMIT I WILL BE MAKING MOST OF THESE UP ON THE SPOT BUT I ASSURE YOU THEY ARE EXQUISITELY IMPORTANT. NOW MANY OF THESE RULES AND BYLAWS HAVE NOT BEEN WRITTEN DOWN YET BUT I AM IN THE PROCESS OF SEARCHING FOR A RECORDKEEPER WHO WILL BE ABLE TO COMPLY WITH ALL MY RECORDKEEPING RULES, WHICH, OF COURSE, ARE ENTIRELY SEPARATE FROM THE RULES AND REGULATIONS YOU ARE VERY LUCKY

NOW WITHOUT FURTHER ADO, LET ME PRESENT THE RULES - BUT FI EXPLAIN THE PRE- MANY MANY RULES H OF COURSE,

THUD

BLAH BLAH BLAH

HUMAN CHILD...

SHHHH!

YOU HAD AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE GUARDIAN, I SEE.

WOULD IT HAVE KILLED ME?

HE WOULD HAVE BORED YOU TO DEATH.

THAT'S SO DUMB

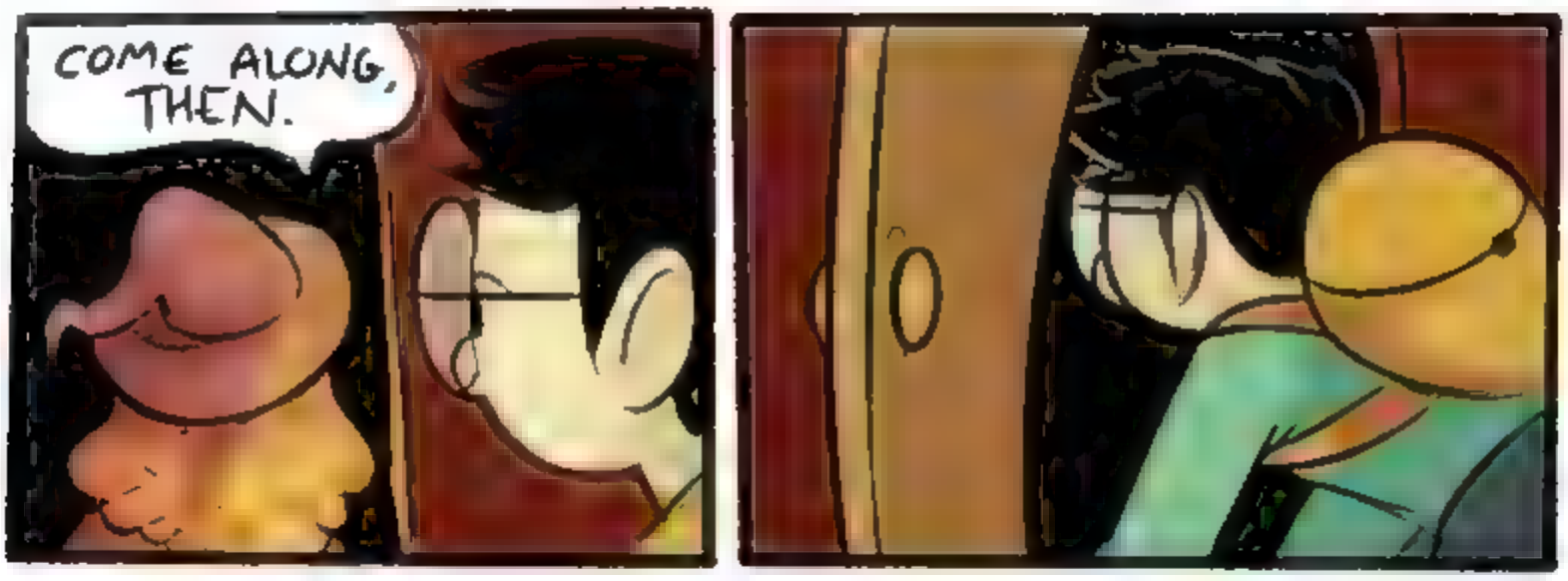
WELL, HE WOULD HAVE EATEN YOU AND SPIT OUT YOUR BONES, TOO.

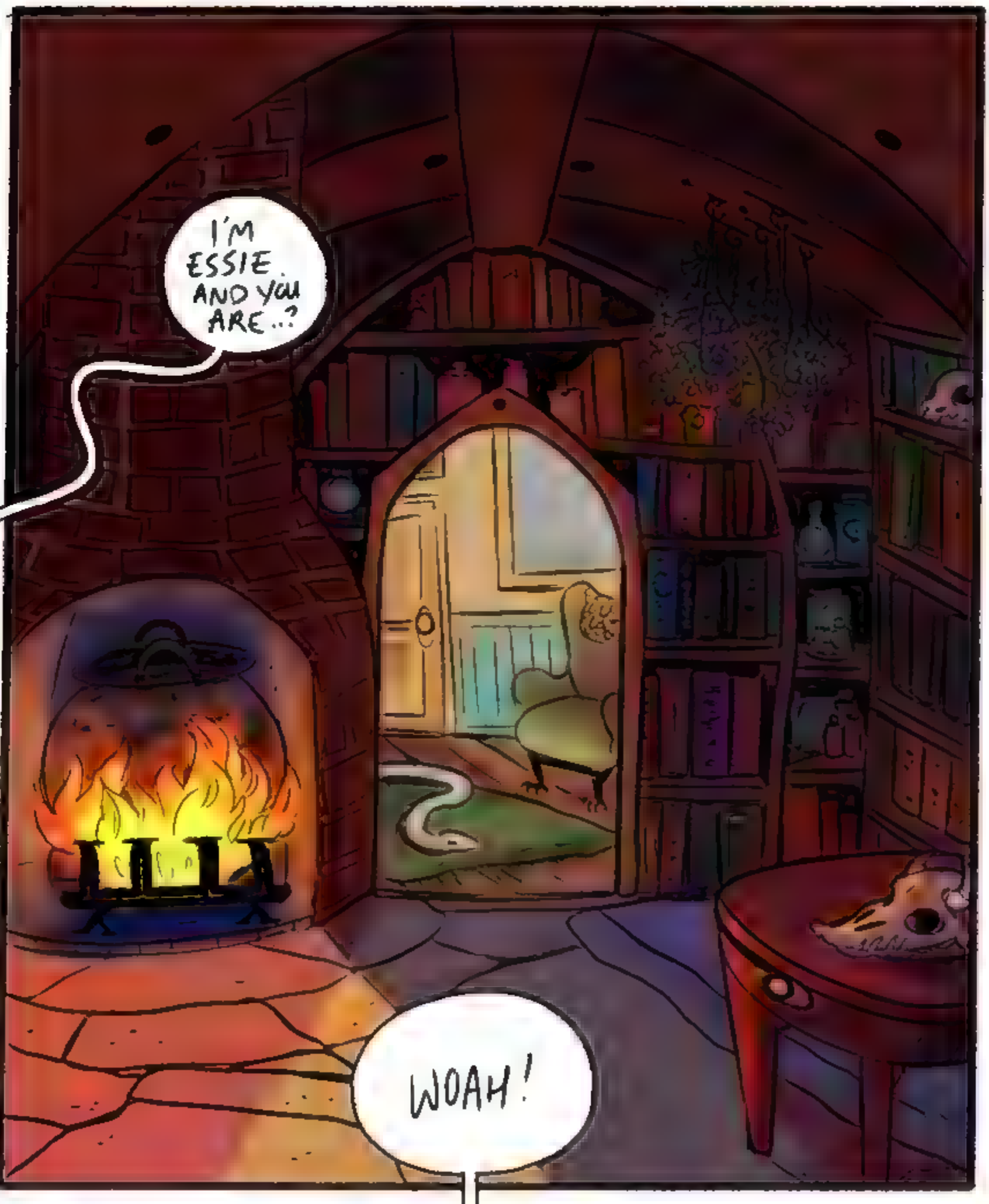
OH

IF YOU WANT TO WAIT INSIDE, HE'LL GET BORED AND GO BACK TO HIS POST EVENTUALLY.

...

YEAH ...OK


COME ALONG, THEN.


I'M ESSIE AND YOU ARE..?
WOAH!

NICE DIGS.

THANK YOU, DEAR!

I DONT WANT TO BREAK ANYTHING THOUGH...

OH! NOT TO WORRY!

SO. MAYBE YOU CAN TELL ME... WHAT HAPPENS TO HUMANS THAT COME TO DEMON STREET?

I SUPPOSE YOU WANT A SIMPLE ANSWER, LIKE "THEY ARE EATEN" YES?

NO... I'D RATHER HAVE AN ANSWER THAT ISN'T THAT

LOTS OF STUFF! CAN I OFFER YOU SOME TEA? SOUP?

SO THERE ARE OTHER HUMANS HERE

SURE! I'VE BEEN MAKING A BIT OF A STUDY OF THEM. YOU'RE ALL SO INTERESTING

PLUS I CAN SEE THEM WITH MY MAGIC EYE

COOL

YOU CAN DO MAGIC??

OF COURSE! DIDN'T YOU NOTICE MY POINTY HAT?

IF YOU INTEND TO CONTINUE ON, MAY I SUGGEST SOMETHING TO YOU?

YOU OUGHT TO TRAVEL WITH SOMEONE WHO KNOWS THE AREA. A GUIDE, IF YOU WILL!

hmm~

hrrr

THUNK

GASP GASP GASP

I HAVE SOMEONE IN MIND

SKREEEE

..AW CMON. I CAN'T CUT YOU IN HALF ALL DAY, YOU GUYS.

EEE EEEE EEE

HMF.

SHOOM

EEEEEEEE

I'M! NOT! FOOD!!

THOCK

EEEEE EEEEE

EEEEE

LEAVE ME AND ESSIE ALONE AND THIS WON'T HAPPEN!

SHOOM

SNAP

CLIP

FINKLE

ESSIE! HEY!

HEY, RAINA! C'MON IN!

THE AXE WORKS GREAT. I DROVE OUT THE... OH! ANOTHER ONE! HI, I'M RAINA.

UH

HEY NEWBIE

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO SHOW HIM AROUND

UHM

ESS, I KNOW I OWE YOU ONE, BUT, LIKE,

OH, PLEASE?

UH

I DONT KNOW WHO ELSE COULD POSSIBLY DO IT! YOU KNOW THE AREA BETTER THAN ANYONE. YOU'RE THE ONLY GAL FOR THE JOB.

UH.

JEEZ

I GUESS IF I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DO IT...

THEN IT'S SETTLED! RAINA WILL SHOW YOU AROUND. HOW DOES THAT SOUND TO YOU, DEAR?

UHHHHHH WELL...

SOUNDS GREAT

AH I BEAT THOSE SPIDER BEASTS BUT GOOD.

TEA?

SURE.

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A SPIDERBEAST, KID?

NO

OH THEY'RE BIG

AND HAIRY

AND THEY HAVE THESE EARS WHICH ARE KINDA CUTE.

ESSIE GAVE ME THIS THING, IT'S ACTUALLY WEAPONS.

SO I PULLED THE AXE OFF THE THING AND CHOPPED A BUNCH OF THEIR LEGS OFF AND THEY RAN

THEY WERE ALL 'EEE! EEEEEE! EEEE!

RAINA'S A GREAT STORY TELLER

YEAH.

SO ANYWAY, KID, WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?

I DONT KNOW, REALLY ...I DIDNT WANT TO JUST IGNORE WHAT WAS DOWN HERE LIKE EVERYONE WAS DOING. I WANTED TO KNOW.

YOU'RE NOT HERE FOR THE QUEST?

UM? NO?

I MEAN THE LOST... THE LOST STREET? YOU RE NOT..

NO I... DID YOU LIVE ON THE LOST STREET? IS THAT WHY YOU...

I... NEVERMIND

RAINA. I..

I **THINK** I HAVE A LEAD FOR YOU

IT'S- AM-

SO

...SO I SEE YOU'VE GOT A MAP THERE.

MMM-HMM

WAIT, HERE WE GO.

WE NEED TO GET ABOVE THE FALLING SPORES

SPORES?

COOL

SO YOU REALLY ARENT HERE FOR THE QUEST?

WHAT'S THE QUEST?

GREAT! YOU CAN COME WITH ME ON MY QUEST, THEN. AND WHILE I'M DOING THAT, YOU CAN DO WHATEVER.

BUT FIRST WE NEED TO STOP AT MY PLACE

RAINA?

YUP?

"THE QUEST"... ??

WOW... CHILL.

SO YOU DON'T WANT ME TO KNOW YOUR NAME BUT YOU WANT MY WHOLE LIFE STORY?

HEY WAIT!

IT'S SEP. I'M SEP.

AND THAT'S SHORT FOR, LIKE, SEPTEMBER?

SEPTIMUS

PFFFFFFFT

COME ON, QUIT IT!

SORRY, SORRY

HUMPH

OK HOW'S THIS WE'LL GO OVER TO MY PLACE AND I'LL EXPLAIN A BIT BETTER AND THEN WE START THE QUEST FOR REAL, OK?

ALRIGHT

SO YOU HAVE, LIKE, YOUR OWN HOUSE, THEN?

KINDA

COOL

SSSS

COME...

SSSS

HEH

HEH

HEH

HEH

HERE IT IS.
I FIXED IT UP. IT
HASNT GOT TERMITES
OR ANTYTHING

THAT'S BETTER

YOUR HOUSE IS REALLY COOL.

YEAH, IT'S OK. ESSIE HELPED ME FIX IT UP AT FIRST, SO, YOU KNOW, THERE'S NO WORMS. IT'S WARM.

I'VE ALWAYS WANTED A FORT LIKE THIS, UNDER A TREE AND EVERYTHING, IT MUST BE GREAT TO BE OUT ON YOUR OWN.

NOT REALLY. I'VE BEEN HERE SINCE THE HUMAN STREET DISAPPEARED. ABOUT THREE MONTHS, I GUESS.

I CAME HOME ONE DAY AND EVERYTHING WAS GONE. EVERY**BODY** TOO. MY PARENTS...

EVERYBODY. SO I JUST. FOLLOWED.

AND HERE I AM.

I'M SORRY THAT HAPPENED

YEAH

WE'LL HEAD FOR THE CITY TOMORROW. I HAVE SOME BLANKETS AND STUFF FOR NOW.

HERE, GRAB ONE.

OK

HEY UM... THANKS FOR TAKING ME WITH YOU. YOU DON'T HAVE TO.

I DON'T MIND. YOU'RE ALRIGHT.

BUMP

THE GUARDIAN

EYES →

can look in a lot of directions

BLUH BLUH

wierd arms

EVIL

spider robot legs

Essie seems nice

HOUSE

Some demons are friendly

a witch or a girl wizard

Magic eye

WHAT'S UP?

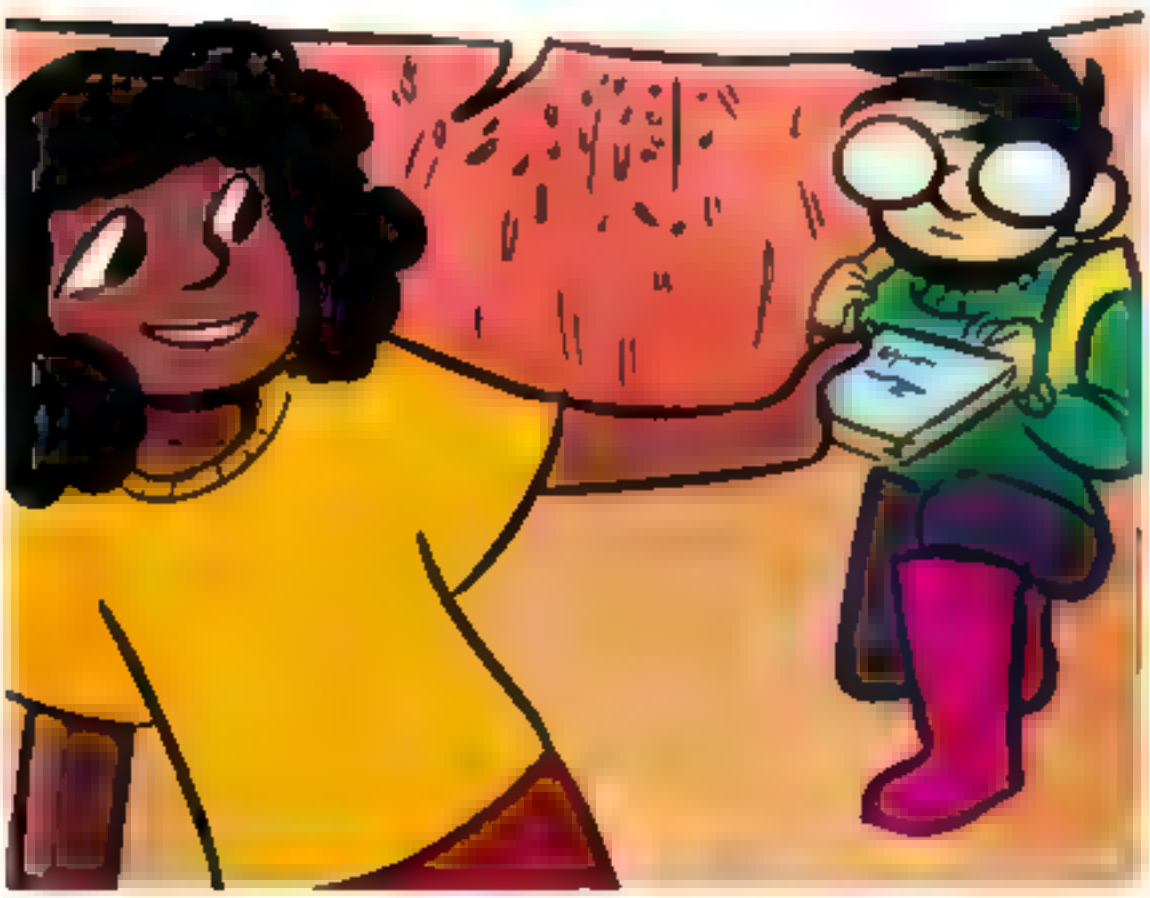
NOTHING I'M NOT DRAW-ING!

THIS IS PRETTY COOL... DO I HAVE A PAGE?

NOOOOOO

WELL, YOU'LL HAVE PLENTY OF CHANCES TO FILL IT! WE'LL BE GOING THROUGH SOME REAL WILD AREAS.

OH, YEAH? I THOUGHT WE WERE GOING STRAIGHT TO THE CITY FROM HERE.



WELL YEAH, BUT THE ROAD TO THE DEMON CITY ISN'T WHAT I'D CALL "HUMAN SAFE", YA KNOW?

OH

IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT IT, I MEAN, I'M GOOD AT KILLING MONSTERS, SO...

I'M A LITTLE WORRIED.

IT'S FIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIINE.

LATER

IT'S FINE?

YEAH

EVEN LATER

FINE?

SHH

LATER STILL

SHUT UP

HELLO, HUMAN.
HELLO. MY FRIEND AND I WISH TO PASS OVER YOUR CHASM UNHARMED.
AH. YOU. I REMEMBER. YOU KNOW MY PRICE ALREADY.
YEAH
HEY! HOW GOOD ARE YOU WITH RIDDLES?
I'M OK, I GUESS...
DO YOU NEED ONE ANSWERED?
NO

IT IS SIMPLE. YOU TELL ME A RIDDLE. IF I LIKE IT, YOU PASS.

OH.

AND... IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT?

HEHEHE

EEEEHH

WW W W

WWHAA A...

UMMM

OK....

SAY MY NAME AND I RUN AWAY. DO NOT CALL ME AND I'LL RETURN. WHAT AM I?

A CAT? LUCK? A SILLY HUMAN?

DO YOU GIVE UP?

IT'S SILENCE!

YOU ARE INTERRUPTING.

YOU DIDN'T GET IT!

THANK YOU

YOU ARE LUCKY TO BE CHARMING. PASS.

BYE

NICE ONE

I THOUGHT YOU WERE GONNA END UP HAVING TO FIGHT THAT THING!

OH NO... I'VE BEEN THROUGH HERE BEFORE. I RAN OUT OF RIDDLES.

ACTUALLY, WE'RE DONE THE EASY PART.

WHAT

THAT'S NEXT.

OH

AWOOO

WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO BE REAL CAREFUL HERE...

SHOOM

CAREFUL OF WHAT, EXACTLY?

HHH

HHHH HH HH

HHH

RUSTLE

CRUNCH

CRACK

SHH WAIT A SEC...

DO YOU H-

THUNK

RUN

THROW

AAAAAAAAAA

SKID

THUD

AAAA

THUD
THUD
THUD

CRACK
CRACK
CRACK
THUD
PSSSSSSST!
ARE YOU ALRIGHT?
YEAH, ARE Y...
YEAH, D'YOU THINK IT'S STILL..
HUFF
HUFF
SNORT
SNIFF
FFF

IT'S STILL UP THERE.

YOU THREW AWAY YOUR WEAPON...

WH...YOU WERE THE ONE WHO-

NO NO THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT

I MEAN,

HOW DO WE GET IT BACK?

OH

I JUST NEED TO REPLACE THE CHARM AND A NEW AXE WILL SPAWN THE NEXT TIME I USE IT.

OK. AND WHAT DO WE HAVE FOR NOW?

SWORD... SPEAR... SHIELD... ARROWS... SLING SHO--

WAIT

I GOT IT.

FFFt

FFFt

FFFt

FFFt

CLINK

YOU GOT ANYTHING SHINY?

YEAH

TIE IT ON OK?

OK

YOU CAN SHOOT IT?

WELL

IN THEORY, YEAH.

I DON'T HAVE TO BE PERFECT, ANYWAY.

TING!

CRASH
CRASH
CRASH
CRASH
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
CRACK
SPLASH
SPLOOSH
SPLOOSH
SPLASH
SPLOOSH
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

PHEWWWWW

YOU'D THINK ALMOST DYING WOULD GET EASIER OVER TIME

NAH

YOU KNOW, THIS ISN'T NEARLY AS FUN AS I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE.

HAHAHA...

BUT IT IS KINDA FUN, ISN'T IT?

NO

HAHA YEAH

THE CITY'S OVER THAT MOUNTAIN...

WE HAVE TO CLIMB A MOUNTAIN??

NAH, THERE'S A PASS

IT'S... UM...

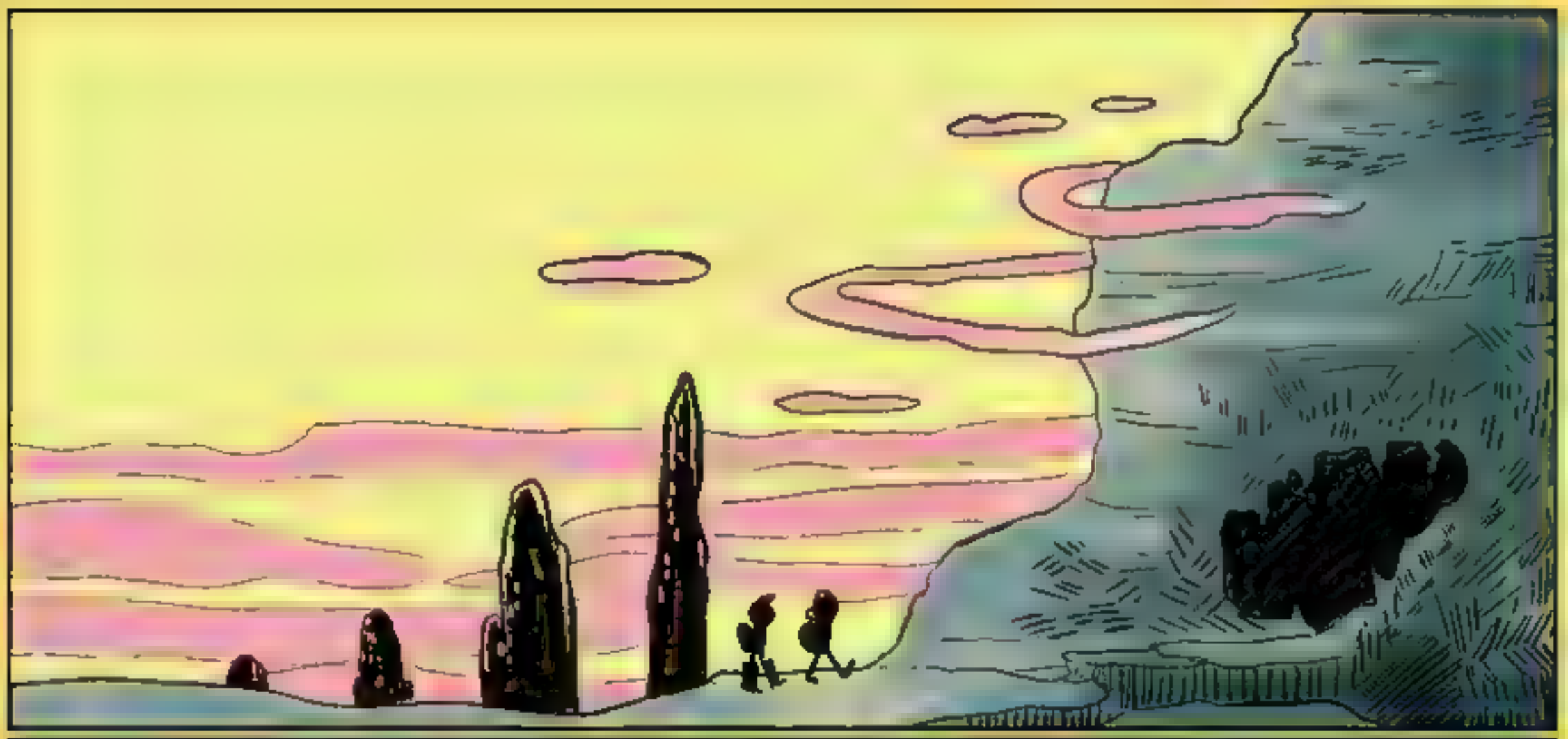
DRIP

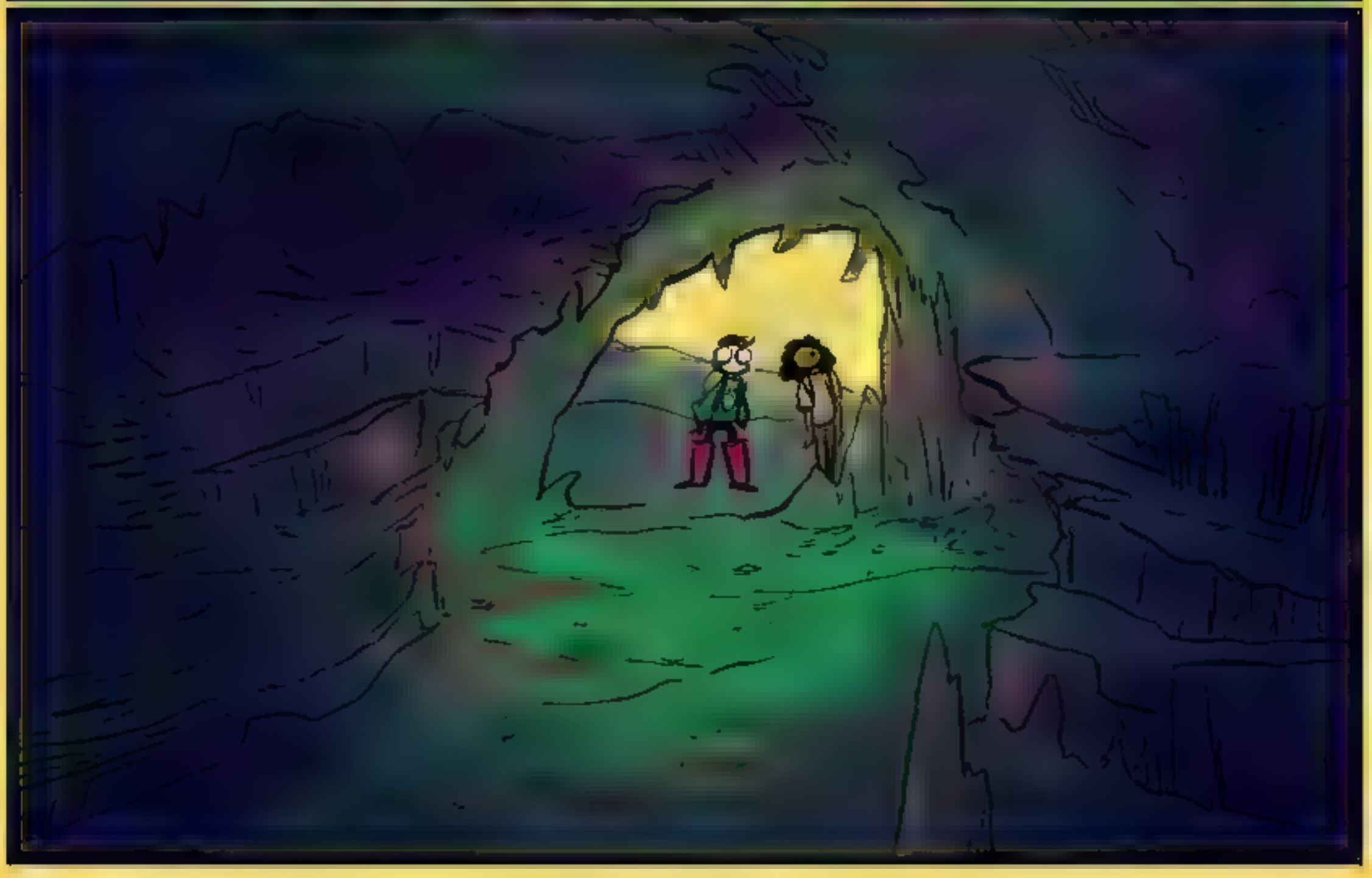
DRIP

DRIP

HHHHHHHH

IT'S A PIECE OF CAKE.





NOOOO OOOOO

YEAH, OK, I KNOW.

I'M GONNA LIGHT A TORCH AND I'M GONNA BASH THE FIRST THING I SEE IN THE FACE WITH IT AND THEN WE RUN AWAY.

THAT'S A HORRIBLE IDEA

MAYBE IT **IS**

GRAB THE BACK OF MY SHIRT AND DON'T LOOK ANYTHING IN THE EYES. WE'RE GONNA DO THIS. HERE WE GO.

BUT

WHUMP

RRRRRRRRRRRRAAAAA

KEEP A LOOKOUT FOR OTHER HUMAN KIDS... WE'RE CLOSE, I THINK.

YOU DON'T KNOW?

I'VE NEVER BEEN TO THEIR PLACE.

IT SHOULDN'T BE HARD. A HUMAN WOULD STICK OUT LIKE A SORE THUMB HERE.

YOU'D BE SURPRISED...

FLICK

HERE.

THANKS

SO IS THERE SOMEONE COMING?

SHHH

OH IT'S RAINA...

AND SOMEONE NEW.

SHOULD I GO SEE WHAT THEY'RE ABOUT?

LET'S ALL GO. GO TELL NORN, OK?

HEY, GUESS WHAT!

I DON'T WANNA GUESS WHAT.

TOO BAD!

RAINA'S HERE.

YOU'RE PROB'LY ECSTATIC.

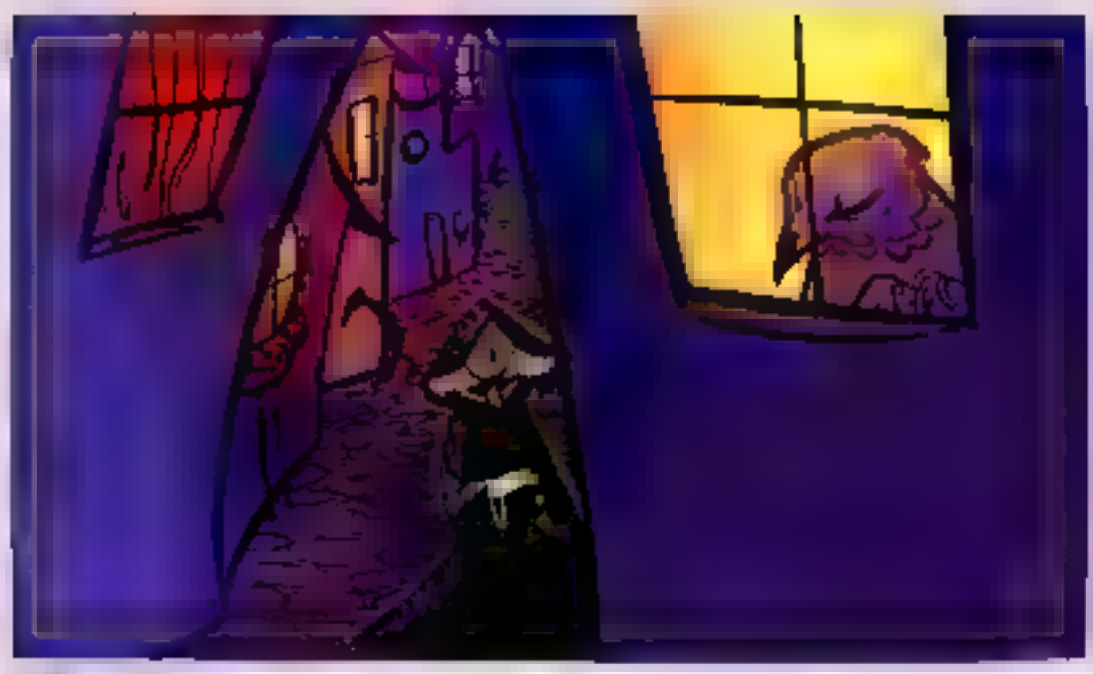
THERE'S ALSO A NEW KID WITH HER.

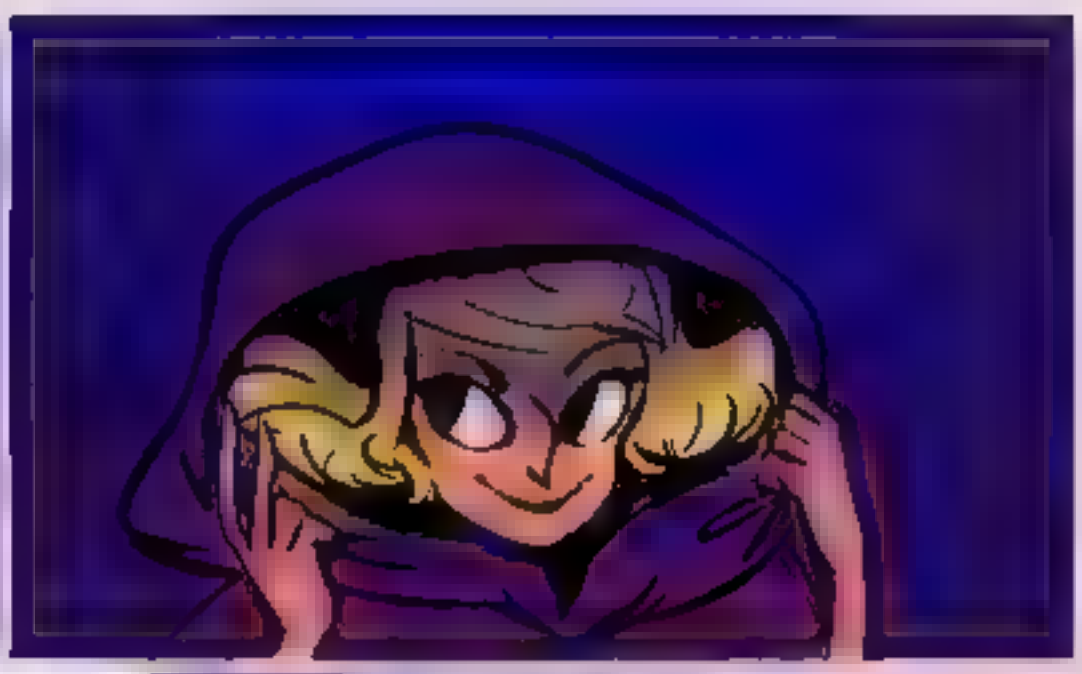
AH, NEW BLOOD

COME ON. CELINE SAW THEM HEADING UP TOWARDS THE LIBRARY.

LET'S GO BE CIVIL AT 'EM.

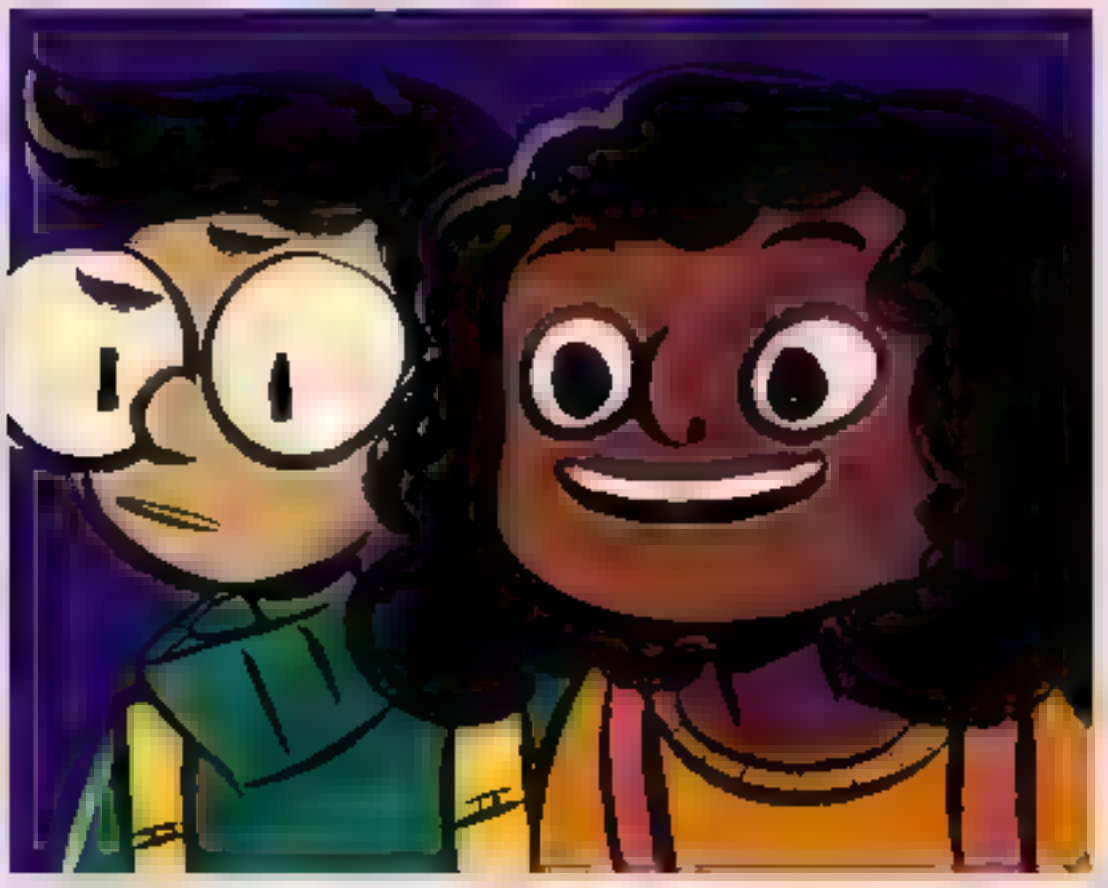
YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY ARE EITHER, HUH?





HEY!

HEY GUYS!



OHMYGOSH

RAINA!

WHUMP

SEP, THIS IS MY FRIEN-

SHHH SHH SHH SHH SHH LET ME DO IT

MY NAME'S HANDY.

SHORT FOR HANDREA

REALLY.

IS THAT RE-

NO NO I'M JUST MESSING WITH YOU. MY NAME'S KATE.

THE ARMS LOOK GREAT ON YOU, THOUGH.

YEAH, I LIKE 'EM

SO, WHERE'S YOUR SISTER?

CELINE'S DOING THE USUAL FAKE CLOAK AND DAGGER.

DAGGER?

OH, I SEE.

HURRY UP!

OHHH

OH MY GOD! IS A SINGLE IMPRESSIVE ENTRANCE TOO MUCH TO ASK OF HER?

YOU KNOW THEY **CAN** SEE US FROM HERE.

MON DIEU

STOP

HERE THEY COME.

ENCHANTÈE, CELINE.

GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, RAINA. AND THIS IS...?

SEP

SEPTIMUS

THIS IS NORN.

CHARMED

SO, WHERE ARE YOU LIVING THESE DAYS? WE'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL EVENING.

WELL, YOU'RE STANDING IN FRONT OF IT, SO THAT'S A CLUE.

SO, YOU SPAWNED ALL THE WAY OUT IN THE DESERT LANDS?

I GUESS SO...

YOU CAN LEAVE YOUR BAGS HERE IF YOU'D LIKE.

SPAWNED?

IT MEANS WHERE YOU SHOWED UP HERE.

I THOUGHT THERE WAS ONLY ONE WAY IN.

SO DID WE, AT FIRST.

I'VE BEEN STUDYING IT FOR A WHILE NOW. THERE ARE PORTALS TO DEMON STREET ALL OVER OUR WORLD. FROM WHAT I CAN GATHER, ALL THE STREETS WENT MISSING AT THE SAME TIME.

HMM

RAINA APPEARED HERE WITH CELINE AND ME, BUT WE'RE FROM TOTALLY DIFFERENT COUNTRIES!

ARE YOU ALL JUST GONNA STAND IN THE HALL?

YOU WERE HERE IN THE CITY AT FIRST?

OH? YEAH, A LITTLE AFTER THEY GOT HERE. WE WERE THE ONLY KIDS, WE HELPED EACH OTHER.

THAT WAS BEFORE SHE LEFT US TO GO ADVENTURING.

YEAH

BUT I KNOW YOU LIKE US.

I DO.

WHY'S EVERYONE IN THE HALL?

THE DOCTOR WILL BE WITH YOU IN A FEW MINUTES, OK?

COUGH
COUGH
COUGH

CELINE?

HMM?

I THINK I HAVE TO THROW UP AGAIN.

OH,TH– THERE'S A TRASH CAN HERE.... HOLD TIGHT...

RUMBLE

HELP!!!

UNDER THE TABLE—

CAN'T ANYONE HEAR US?!

SHATTER

AAAAAAAA

COVER YOUR EYES!

WHAT...

STAY THERE FOR A SECOND...

WHERE DID THE STREET GO?

OH MY GOD

THE AIR SMELLS GOOD.

I DON'T HAVE TO THROW UP

WAIT!

THUD

CELINE! COME ON!

IT'S OK! COME OUT!

THE GLASS...

IT'S GONE.

COME ON, IT'S OK, REALLY!

WA-WA

AAAGH

WUMPH

HAHA, GOT YA!

TU VAS BIEN, CELINE?

ÇA VA...

AH...

I THOUGHT THERE WOULD BE A PORTAL OPENING TODAY! I DO LOVE BEING RIGHT.

HUP!

OOOOO-KAY

HELLO!

HI, IS THAT A REAL DRAGON?!

WAIT A SEC, THERE.

ARE YOU A WITCH?!

I...

I'M...

HEHE! I SUPPOSE YOU COULD SAY I'M A HUMAN ENTHUSIAST!

IF YOU'RE NOT HUMAN

THEN WHAT ARE YOU?

THAAATS... NOT IMPORTANT

UH, CELINE..

NONE OF THIS IS HELPING ME UNDERSTAND ANYTHING AT ALL.

YOU DON'T NEED TO UNDERSTAND YET... I DO W-

WOBBLE

CELINE

WOBBLE

SLAM

NO...

OH MY GOD

HOW WILL WE GET HOME?

THAT'S SOONER THAN USUAL...

YOU... KNEW IT WOULD DO THAT?

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS?

MY DEAR, YOU...

...ARE THE MOST DANGEROUS CHILD I'VE EVER MET.

DANGEROUS?

CALM DOWN, DEAR, THIS ISN'T..

DON'T TELL **ME** TO CALM DOWN!

I...

IF I'M *DANGEROUS*, THEN I CAN **MAKE** YOU SEND US HOME.

NO, CELINE. YOU CANNOT.

FINE.

DON'T HELP US, THEN.

I DO WANT TO HELP YOU!

OH, THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THAT.

I'LL BE SURE TO TRUST YOUR HELP AFTER ALL THIS.

WAIT!

I CAN'T FORCE YOU TO LISTEN TO ME. I WOULDN'T IF I COULD. BUT HEED THIS ONE THING, PLEASE? YOU CAN EASILY FIND YOUR OWN WAY.

BUT DO NOT LOSE YOUR NAME. FORGET ME AND EVERYTHING I'VE SAID IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT, BUT REMEMBER THAT.

THE WAY BACK TO YOUR HOME IS CLOSED! I DID NOT CLOSE IT. IT COLLAPSED, THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO. I DO NOT OPEN THOSE WAYS.

I'LL GIVE WORD TO MY CONTACTS IN THE CITY THAT YOU'RE ARRIVING. THERE WILL BE A PLACE FOR YOU THERE, IF YOU WANT IT.

GREAT.

HOW'RE YOU FEELING?

I'M OK.

WELL

DO YOU WANNA GO TO THE CITY?

OK

OK

BUT ONLY IF YOU CARRY MY BUTT.

I AM NOT CARRYING YOUR BUTT!

SO, THEN, IN THE CITY...

HELLO, THERE! TELL ME, YOU'RE NOT FROM HERE, ARE YOU?

H...HELLO. WE'RE NOT FROM HERE, NO.

COULD YOU DO THAT SPELL AGAIN?

HUMANS CAN DO MAGIC HERE. BUT IT'S DIFFERENT FROM ANY MAGIC THE DENIZENS HAVE. IT'S... NEW TO THEM.

!

?

THEY ARE VERY INTERESTED IN SEEING THE THINGS I CAN DO.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND. A STAGE? YOU'RE AN ACTRESS?

NO, BUT HAVE YOU HEARD OF FIRE-EATERS?

OH...

IT IS SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

KATE IS FEELING MUCH BETTER, SO WE'RE STAYING AS LONG AS WE CAN, AND I WANTED TO MAKE THIS HOUSE AVAILABLE FOR OTHER KIDS WHO END UP HERE. SO FAR IT'S ONLY BEEN RAINA AND NORN, BUT THERE **ARE** OTHER KIDS OUT THERE, AND WE'RE HERE IF WE'RE NEEDED.

THAT'S REALLY INCREDIBLE!

WELL, I'M GLAD **SOMEONE** FOUND IT INTEREST -ING.

HAHA, OH.

WELL, I'M SURE IT WAS A LONG WALK HERE.

YEAH.

WE'RE OFF TO BED. THE COUCH IS ALL YOURS.

THANKS... G'NIGHT.

OH, MY PLEASURE. WE'LL HAVE YOU WELL STOCKED WITH SUPPLIES BEFORE YOU GO.

YOU AND RAINA SEEM TO BE QUITE THE TEAM.

I GUESS WE ARE. IT'S HER THING, REALLY.

OH, WELL, DO YOU KNOW WHY SHE CAME? WE LOVE RAINA, BUT SHE'S PRETTY SINGLE-MINDED. WE DIDN'T EXPECT HER TO JUST DROP BY FOR A VISIT'S SAKE.

I'M REALLY JUST TAGGING ALONG. SHE HAS A MAP THAT ESSIE GAVE HER, I THINK IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH HER FAMILY. I DON'T KNOW A LOT ABOUT IT.

A MAP...? YOU'LL BE WANTING TO ASK NORN ABOUT THAT, I EXPECT.

SWEET DREAMS, SEP.

OH

GAH!

I GUESS YOU'RE UP.

AM NOT

ARE, TOO! WE NEED TO DO SOME QUEST STUFF TODAY. THE MAP AND STUFF.

SO, LIKE YESTERDAY, THEN.

WELL, RIGHT NOW THE QUEST IS BREAKFAST.

GOOD MORNING, YOU TWO. NORN'S EXCITED TO SEE YOUR MAP.

HERE Y'ARE, NORN.

I'D LOVE TO STAY AND SEE IT, BUT I HAVE TO BE AT THE MUSIC HALL IN AN HOUR. SEE YOU IN A WHILE, ALL.

IF YOU'LL GIVE ME THIS FOR A BIT, I CAN TAKE IT DOWN INTO MY STUDIO AND MAKE A NEW AXE CHARM FOR YOU.

OH!

WHAT KINDA AXE DO YA THINK YOU'LL WANT?

WHICHEVER ONE'S THE COOLEST.

DOES ANYONE KNOW HOW TO EAT THIS ORB?

OK, LET'S SEE THIS MAP OF YOURS.

WAIT...

THIS...

I MADE THIS. THIS IS MY MAP.

NO... ESSIE SAID IT WAS A LEAD.

ARE YOU SURE?

WHY WOULD SHE GIVE YOU THIS?

SO. IT'S NOT A LEAD. IT'S NOT A CLUE. IT'S NOTHING.

I UM... I'LL BE BACK, I UH, I NEED TO... GO. FOR A SEC.

DID I DO SOMETHING?

NO, I DON'T THINK IT WAS YOU.

I THINK I NEED TO BE RIGHT BACK, TOO.

WHERE ARE YOU?

SNFFT hfff

LEAN

IT'S JUST, I NEVER EVEN HAD A CLUE BEFORE. I THOUGHT THIS WAS GONNA BE THE END OF THIS WHOLE... LONG... THING. AND NOW THERE'S NOTHING TO DO, HERE, AND I THOUGHT...

I COULD JUST RIP IT UP. I WANT TO RIP IT UP, IT'S NO GOOD ANYWAY.

SNIFFFFT I NEED'A TISSUE.

I DON'T KNOW WHY I THOUGHT THIS ONE THING WAS SO IMPORTANT.

NOW I HAVE TO START OVER.

WELL, I KNOW I'M NOT GOING TO BE, LIKE, ANY HELP, BUT I'LL BE GOING WITH YOU, WHEREVER.

EVEN THOUGH I'M PROBABLY GOING TO GET EATEN OR SINK INTO A BOG OCEAN OR SOMETHING, AND IT'LL SUCK BIG TIME.

SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO FIND THEM ALL BY YOURSELF.

GUYS?

I THINK I'VE FOUND SOMETHING, HERE.

THERE'S SOMETHING ON THE MAP AFTER ALL, AT LEAST I THINK. I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO SEE IT BEFORE.

OH... YOU OK?

M'FINE. SORRY I RAN. WHAT'D YOU FIND?

WELL, I WAS WONDERING WHY ESSIE WOULD HAVE GIVEN YOU THIS,

SO I CHECKED TO SEE IF THERE HAD BEEN ANY CHANGES TO MY DRAWING.

SEE THIS? I DIDN'T DRAW THIS.

WHY MY SHIRT?!

I DON'T KN-

I BOUGHT THIS SHIRT

AT THE MALL

AND I KNOW FOR A FACT THAT IT IS NOT *HUMMING WITH MAGICAL SIGNIFICANCE*

DO YOU NEED TO LIE DOWN

I GUESS ALL KINDS OF THINGS CAN BE SIGNIFICANT HERE.

BUT IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL BETTER, HERE'S SOMETHING ELSE WEIRD.

HAVE EITHER OF YOU EVER SEEN THIS SYMBOL BEFORE?

NO...

WELL I HAVE.

IF YOU TWO WOULD LIKE TO STEP INTO MY OFFICE...

IT'S SOMEWHERE HERE IN MY NOTES.

HERE WE GO.

I'VE SEEN THESE TWO SYMBOLS EVERYWHERE. GRAFFITI, BOOKS, AMULETS, WINDOWS...

THEY'RE DRAWN LIKE COUNTERPARTS OR TWINS, BUT ALWAYS FIGHTING EACH OTHER.

I THINK THEY MIGHT BE THE CLOSEST THING THIS WORLD HAS...

...TO GODS.

SO... THERE ARE TWO POSSIBLE LEADS. BUT WE DON'T KNOW WHAT EITHER OF THEM MEANS, OR WHY THEY'RE THERE.

YES, BUT IT REALLY IS A GOOD START.

WE HAVE SOMETHING TO GO ON, NOW. BUT WE'LL NEED TO LOOK INTO IT MORE.

WE'LL NEED TO PAY A VISIT TO...

...THE LIBRARY

ALRIGHT.

IF YOU THINK IT'LL HELP.

I LIKE THE LIBRARY.

HEY KATE! WE'RE HEADING TO THE LIBRARY TO GET THE SCOOP ON SOME WEIRD MAP SYMBOLS. YOU IN?

OH HECK YEAH!!

WHAT'S AT THE LIBRARY?

STUFF! THINGS

DO THEY LET PEOPLE CLIMB ON THAT BIG SPINE?

DO YOU WANT TO?

NO

I REALLY DON'T SEE WHAT'S SO EXCITING...

OH. HUH.

SO, UH, WHO MADE THOSE MOUNDS?

THE LIBRARIANS.

HOW FAR ALONG ARE YOU WITH MY BRACELET?

GETTING THERE, WHY?

IT JUST FEELS WEIRD TO NOT BE WEARING IT, I DUNNO

OH RELAX. YOU'LL ONLY BE OFF YOUR HOME TURF FOR A LIL WHILE

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

I...

I HAVE NO IDEA.

HELLO!

HELLOOOOO

HELLO

EHEHE

WELCOME

THESE ARE MY FRIENDS

WELL I MUST SAY. ANY ENORMOUS ANT FRIENDS OF YOURS ARE FRIENDS OF MINE.

OH, YOU ARE THE GIRL WHO KATE TALKS ABOUT ALL THE TIME.

YOU ARE MOST WELCOME!

OH!

THE GIRL

IT IS!

OHH

HEHE

PLEASE COME IN

SO DID YOU KNOW KATE WAS FRIENDS WITH MILLIONS OF GIANT ANTS?

I DID NOT KNOW THIS, NO.

SO, WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR TODAY?

I'VE GOT A LIST HERE, SOMEWHERE.

YOU'LL BE WANTING TO SPEAK TO THE ARCHIVIST ABOUT THAT, I BELIEVE.

THANK YOU, SISTER. KATE, MOTHER WOULD LIKE A FAVOR.

NOD

WHAT SORT OF A FAVOR?

WE HAVE A... LARGE INFESTATION

LET ME PULL UP THE DETAILS

HM

OKAY!

BIP

CLAP

I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT BUT IF MY FRIENDS ARE COMING ALONG, WE'LL NEED AN AXE AND STUFF

DONT FEEL THAT YOU HAVE TO COME ALONG, THOUGH

UH

OF COURSE WE WILL!

ONE SHIELD, PLEASE I WONT BE FIGHTING.

OH SAME HERE NO WASP MONSTERS FOR ME THANKS

KATE, DONT YOU NEED A WEAPON?

WHAT, ON MY HOME TURF?

No WAY!

THE PROBLEM IS OFF THE MAIN LIBRARY, IN THE ABANDONED TUNNELS. A GUARD WILL ACCOMPANY YOU, OF COURSE.

HELLO!

THE QUEEN WILL SEE YOU AFTERWARD. I'M SURE SHE'LL WANT TO THANK YOU PERSONALLY.

DO YOU HAVE ANY WEAPONS FOR US?

ROD

OH. HEAVY.

HAVE YOU EVER FOUGHT A CREATURE LIKE THIS BEFORE?

NOTHING BIG, NO.

NOTHIN' THAT'S A WASP.

NO

AGAIN I'M NOT FIGHTING

SCRRRR

DRIP

DROP

CLICK

CLICK

KATE, I THINK NOW IS THE TIME

RIGHT

CLAP

OH!

THUMB

THUMB

EVERYBODY READY?

KATE!

OHWOW

I HAVE A VERY

VERY

IMPORTANT QUESTION

CAN YOU LIFT ME IN THE AIR WITH ONE HAND.

PROBABLY

OMG

HSSSSSSSSSS

FOR THE LAST 12 SECONDS I HAVE DREAMED OF NOTHING ELSE.

UH, GUYS?

MAYBE NOW'S NOT THE TIME...

YEAH, ALRIGHT

IT'S PROBLY ONE OF THOSE THINGS WHERE IT'S ALL SCARY AND OMINOUS BUT THEN TURNS OUT TO BE REALLY SMALL.

ALRIGHT?

GRAK

KKKSSSKKSSKS

KSHKH

HSSSS

OR NOT

CRUNCH

WHAP

WHAP

WHAP

EEEEEEEEEE

EEEEEEEEEE

SKITTER

SKITTER

SKITTER

HSSS

I'M COMING!

SSSHHSSSS

HEY, BUG BABY!!

SLICE!

EEEEE

KATE!!

DUCK, KATE!

ZING

CLANG

SKITTER SKITTER SKITTER

PTOOO

NICE ONE

THANK YOU

WE HAVE TO SEAL ITS ENTRY TUNNEL

GOT IT.

GOTTA GO, THOUGH!

YOU OK?

I'M OK. YOU REALLY DID A NUMBER ON THAT THING!

NORN!

LOOK AT THE MARKS! ITS EXOSKELETON MUST BE SO...

THUD

YEAH, YOU'D BETTER GO IN THE HOLE.

GET YOUR OWN DANG BUG LIBRARY!!

THUD

WHY DON'T I GIVE YOU A HAND

IT HAD TO BE THE PERFECT MOMENT

THUD

IT TOOK YOU SO LONG TO MAKE THAT JOKE YOU REALLY WAITED IT OUT.

EVERYONE OK?

YUP

TOOP

THIS WILL KEEP HER FROM RE-ENTERING THE TUNNELS. A JOB WELL-DONE.

WAIT... CAN'T IT JUST TUNNEL RIGHT BACK IN?

IS EVERYONE ALRIGHT? IS IT GONE?

YES, AND ALSO YES

I'M AFRAID THE SHIELD YOU GAVE ME HAS BEEN MADE A VICTIM OF CIRCUMSTANCE.

NOT WITH THOSE INJURIES.

SO, MAYBE NOW YOU CAN TELL ME WHAT'S UP WITH THE GIANT AR—

KATE?

I HATE TO BE A BOTHER, BUT YOU HAVE A CALL

BWIP!

KATIE!

HUMAN!

I OUGHTA BE!!

WE SHARE INFORMATION VIA A TELEPATHIC LINK-A KIND OF DATABASE...

SO YOU HAVE, LIKE, A KIND OF... BRAIN INTERNET?

ANT-ERNET!

AUGH!

ha

I DO NOT UNDERSTAND YOU AT ALL

WE'RE IN THE CENTRAL TOWER... I LOVE THIS BIT.

HELLO MY DEAR

HELLO, YOUR HIGHNESS!

OH DONT CALL ME THAT

EVERYONE, THIS IS THE ANT QUEEN. UNLESS I CAN'T CALL YOU THAT EITHER?

HI KIDS!

HELLO ANT AUNT UM

HELLO AGAIN NOW HAVE YOU GIVEN MY OFFER ANY THOUGHT?

NO MA'AM, THIS IS PURELY A RESEARCH TRIP.

OH,
REFEARCH FIRST
WHAT DO YOU
NEED TO KNOW?

HERE.

WHIRR
RR

FUCK

HE NAMED

THE NAME
EATER

THAT'S THEM.
SO, THOSE ARE
THEIR TITLES?

I'LL NOTE
GUESSED

THEY ARE CREATURES LIKE ANY OF US
BUT THEY HAVE BEEN EVIL
FOR [illegible]

I HEAR IT'S GOSSIP
TO BE BELIEVED—
THAT THE NAME-EATER
HAS NOT BEEN SEEN IN
THREE MONTHS. AS
LONG AS YOU CHILDREN
HAVE BEEN HERE

THE NAMED AND
NAME-EATER LAID CLAIM TO
MUCH OF THIS WORLD
LONG AGO. BETWEEN THEM,
THEIR TERRITORY
SPANS ALL BUT A FEW
PLACES LIKE OUR
LIBRARY

ALTHOUGH,
THE MARKER THAT MAP
SUGGESTS A POSSIBLE
SPECIFIC LOCATION

I DO NOT SUGGEST
ENGAGING HIM.

BUT IF THAT'S MY LEAD, THEN THAT'S WHERE I'M GOING.
I WOULDN'T ADVISE IT. ALTHOUGH OF COURSE I AM NOT YOUR GUARDIAN.
BUT DOES SOMEONE CALLED THE NAME EATER SOUND LIKE A NICE GUY?
NO
THE CREATURE WE FOUGHT FOR YOU WASN'T SO NICE EITHER.
!!!
YOU'VE GOT ME THERE!
I'M NOT THE BOSS OF YOU

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, ABOUT NOT BEING HER GUARDIAN? WHOSE GUARDIAN ARE YOU?
OH- I THOUGHT YOU KNEW—
MINE.
HMM. SPEAKING OF THAT...
IF THE NAME-EATER IS WHAT HE SOUNDS LIKE, I WANNA PLAY IT SAFE.
NORN!!
BUT MY NAME IS A CHOSEN NAME. NORN, I MEAN. IT'S NOT MY GIVEN NAME.
I'LL TAKE YOUR OFFER.
DOES THAT MATTER?
NORN, YOUR REA NAME IS THE NAME THAT YOU. I DONT NEED TO KNOW WHAT YOU WERE CALLED BEFORE
I DON'T WANT ANYONE TO START THINKING THEY CAN CALL ME "HE" OR "SHE" BASED ON MY OLD GIVEN NAME.
SO DON'T WORRY I AM A BIG ANT AND I KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT
HAHA OK
SO..
SO, THIS IS LIKE KATE'S DEAL.
YOU TAKE MY NAME AND USE IT TO UNLOCK MY ... MAGIC, I GUESS.
AND WHATEVER MADE THIS EYE GROW ON MY HEAD TURNS INTO A BIGGER THING. NOT A BIGGER EYE THOUGH. THIS EYE IS ALREADY TOO BIG.

OK, ARCHIVIST

IT'S A DEAL

NORN MISRA

CLATTER

OH

WOULD'JA LOOK AT THAT! STILL ONLY FOUR LIMBS AND NO FOURTH EYE!

NICE!

OH... I THINK I...

YUP

OH MY GOD I'M AN ANT CYBORG

UH

YOU GOT SOMETHIN' IN YOUR EYE.

UM

LOOK,

THOSE POWERS ARE VERY COOL AND ALL,

BUT I NEED YOU TO EXPLAIN WHY THAT HAPPENED, AND WHAT YOU'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT ALL DAY.

KATE. SHE DOESNT KNOW.

I..

YOUR BRACELET IS ONE OF THOSE POWERS.

I CAN FIX YOUR BRACELET BECAUSE MY HANDS CAN EFFECT IT.

I'M PROBABLY ONE OF THE ONLY HUMANS WHO COULD FIX IT, BESIDES YOU

YOU MUST'VE MADE THE SAME KIND OF DEAL WITH ESSIE AS I DID WITH THE ARCHIVIST IF YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

A DEAL..

RAINA, MAY I TRY SOMETHING? IT WON'T WORK LIKE IT NORMALLY WOULD- BUT IT MIGHT ILLUMINATE A FEW THINGS.

YEAH OK

UM, DUVALL. RAINA DUVALL.

TO TRY

YEAH I THINK SO

THANK YOU.

RAINA DUVALL

BZZZT

IT'S AS I THOUGHT

YOU HAVE ALREADY TRADED YOUR NAME

NO

WHERE IS IT?

OH THANK GOODNESS

RAINA?!

TCH-A

TCH-A

TCH-A

TCH-A

TCH-A

TCH-A

THANKS FOR PAYING OUR FARE BACK TO YOUR HOUSE

OH, IT'S FINE.

TCH-A

TCH-A

TCH-A

RAINA?

YEAH?

TCH-A

THIS MEANS YOU'LL BE LEAVING AGAIN SOON, DOESN'T IT?

I GUESS IT DOES

SO, NORN, ARE YOUR POWERS REDUCED OUTSIDE THE LIBRARY, LIKE KATE'S ARE?

OR—

HM— I DON'T HAVE MUCH EXPERIENCE, BUT THE ARCHIVIST ASKED ME TO SEND BACK MY RESEARCH TO ADD TO THE LIBRARY, SO...

STILL ON. COOL.

HA- YOU REALLY ARE A CYBORG!

I'M NEVER GONNA LEAVE BEHIND MY NOTEBOOK EVER AGAIN.

I CAN HELP YOU ORGANIZE YOUR RESEARCH WHEN WE GET BACK— IF YOU WANT TO—

YEAH! IF WE CAN COMPARE—

SCREECH

OR MAYBE INSTEAD OF YOU LOOKING AT MY NOTES I COULD JUST TELL YOU ABOUT THEM

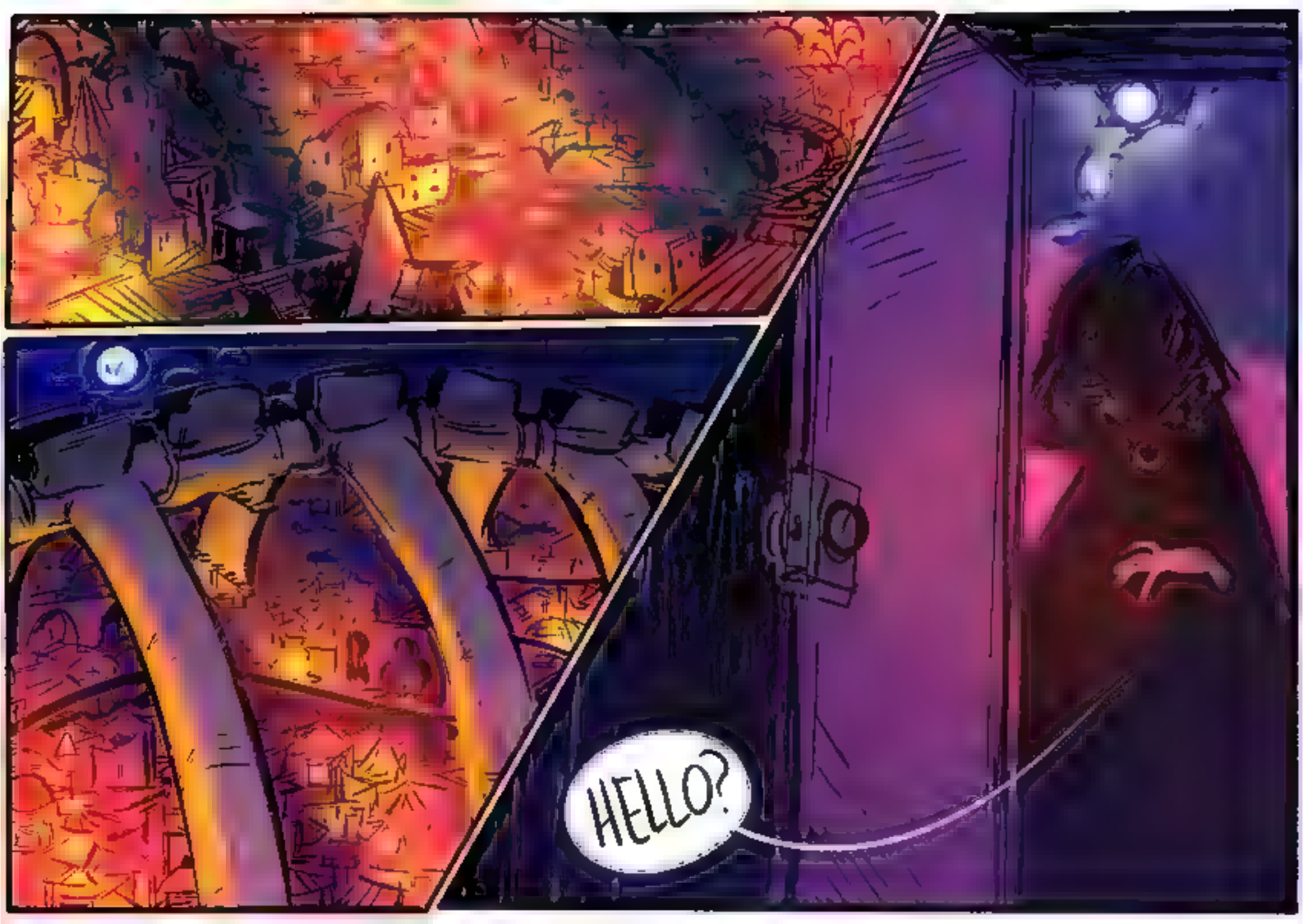
RAINA?

ARE YOU KEEPING THE BRACELET?

SHOULD I STILL FIX IT?

HM

YEAH. I WANNA SEE THE CHARM YOU MADE ME.


HELLO?

ANYONE HOME?

HM..

THEY SHOULD BE BACK ALREADY

LIGHTS ON

FIZZL

LIGHTS ON!

WHAT—

WE'RE BACK!

WH-

WHERE'S THE LIGHTSWITCH?

CELINE?

WHY'S IT SO DARK?

POWER'S OUT. I NEED YOU TO LOOK AT THIS.

RAINA, YOUR BRACELET IS DRAINING ME.

YOU SEE?

YEAH

INHALE

SIGH

I'M GONNA LEAVE TOMORROW.

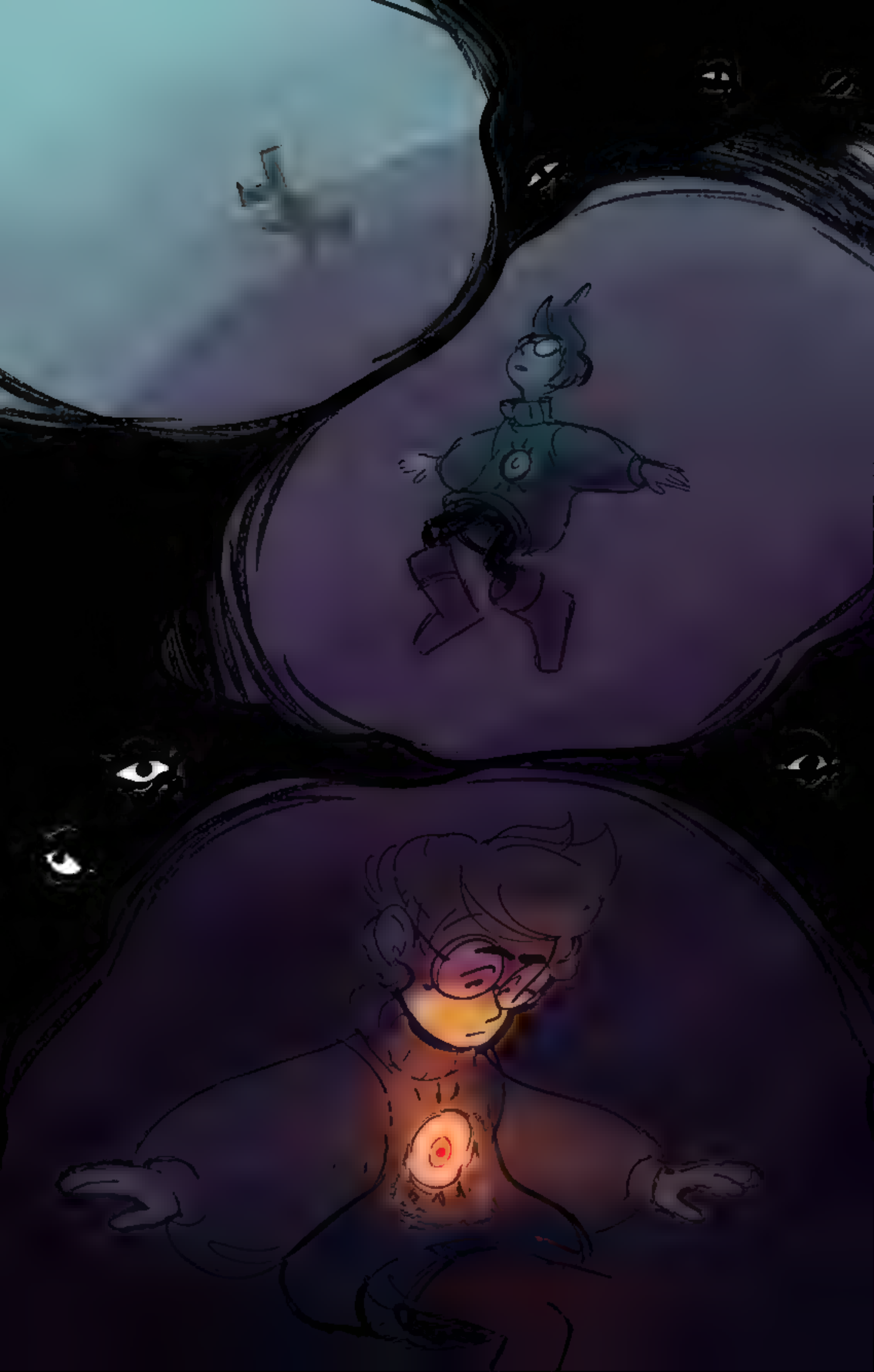
I'LL BE FOLLOWING NORN'S MAP - IF THEY'LL LET ME HAVE IT - OR IF THEY WANNA WRITE DIRECTIONS -

I'LL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE ABOUT THIS THING. UNTIL I HAVE THE TIME.

ARE YOU SURE YOUR BRACELET IS STABLE? IF IT ISN'T WORKING RIGHT -

- THERE'S SO MUCH WE DONT KNOW ABOUT IT.

I'LL HAVE TO TAKE MY CHANCES.



BLINK!

AH. THERE

YOU ARE

SEPTIC

HELLO, SEP!

H—

HI.

HHH
WOW OK
HOOO
I'VE ARRANGED A FEW THINGS FOR YOU—
SOMEONE TO TAKE YOU ACROSS THE DESERT, FOR A START AND THE SUPPLIES ARE OK?
YEAH. THEY'RE GREAT
AND IF YOU NEED ANYTHING, YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO TO ESSIE. WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO HELP YOU
I KNOW YOU WILL. THANK YOU
DONT LEAVE BEFORE SPEAKING TO KATIE
SHE HAS SOMETHING TO GIVE YOU.
OH OF COURSE I WOULDNT!
AAA
TAP
EEEEAVESDROPPING?
OHHH
YOU READ IT.
YEP
IT WAS REAL INTERESTING!

THIS IS THE FIRST RESEARCH I'VE EVER SEEN FROM A HUMAN PERSPECTIVE!
IT'S SO EXCITING-
THANK
YOU
UM
YOU OK?
BPTHHHH
SORRY, JUST GET-
PLACE
RAINA'S WAITING TO TALK TO YOU
I THINK YOU'RE NOT BEING FAIR
I KNOW
SHE'S TOO WORRIED ABOUT HER PARENTS TO STAY.
AND I KNOW THAT BECAUSE YOU EXPLAINED IT TO ME.
IF YOU WAIT AND TELL HER HOW YOU FEEL LATER WHEN IT'S A BETTER TIME —
YOU'RE RIGHT
YEAH I'M RIGHT IT LOOKS AMAZING.
RAINA-
...OH, WOW. IT'S BEAUTIFUL, KATE.

HEY
WHAT'S UP?
HERE
I'M GLAD I COULD FINISH IT BEFORE YOU LEFT
I HOPE IT WORKS
...!
OH
STAND BACK, OK?
HEY. KATE—

I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO GO ON WITHOUT YOUR HELP. BUT THAT'S NOT WHY I CAME.

I—

I'LL BE BACK REALLY SOON.

AND! THEN WE CAN, HANG OUT! IF YOU WANT.

RAINA, YOUR RIDE'S HERE

'KAY

SEE YOU SOON!

READY TO GO?
I GUESS.
CELINE'S ALREADY OUT THERE HAILING A CRAB.
WELL HOW ABOUT THAT
I THINK MY THRESHOLD FOR SURPRISE HAS TAKEN A STEEP UPTURN LATELY

SO YOU'LL TAKE US ALL THE WAY ACROSS THE DESERT?
I CERTAINLY CAN, BUT NO FARTHER
I AM... TOO BIG TO FIT AMONGST THE TREES
NOT TO WORRY, THE DESERT WILL BE FINE.
BIGNESS IS VERY PRETTY, MA'AM
WELL THANK YOU!
SEE YOU SOON, RAINA!
DID-
DID YOU SAY SHE WAS "HAILING A CRAB"

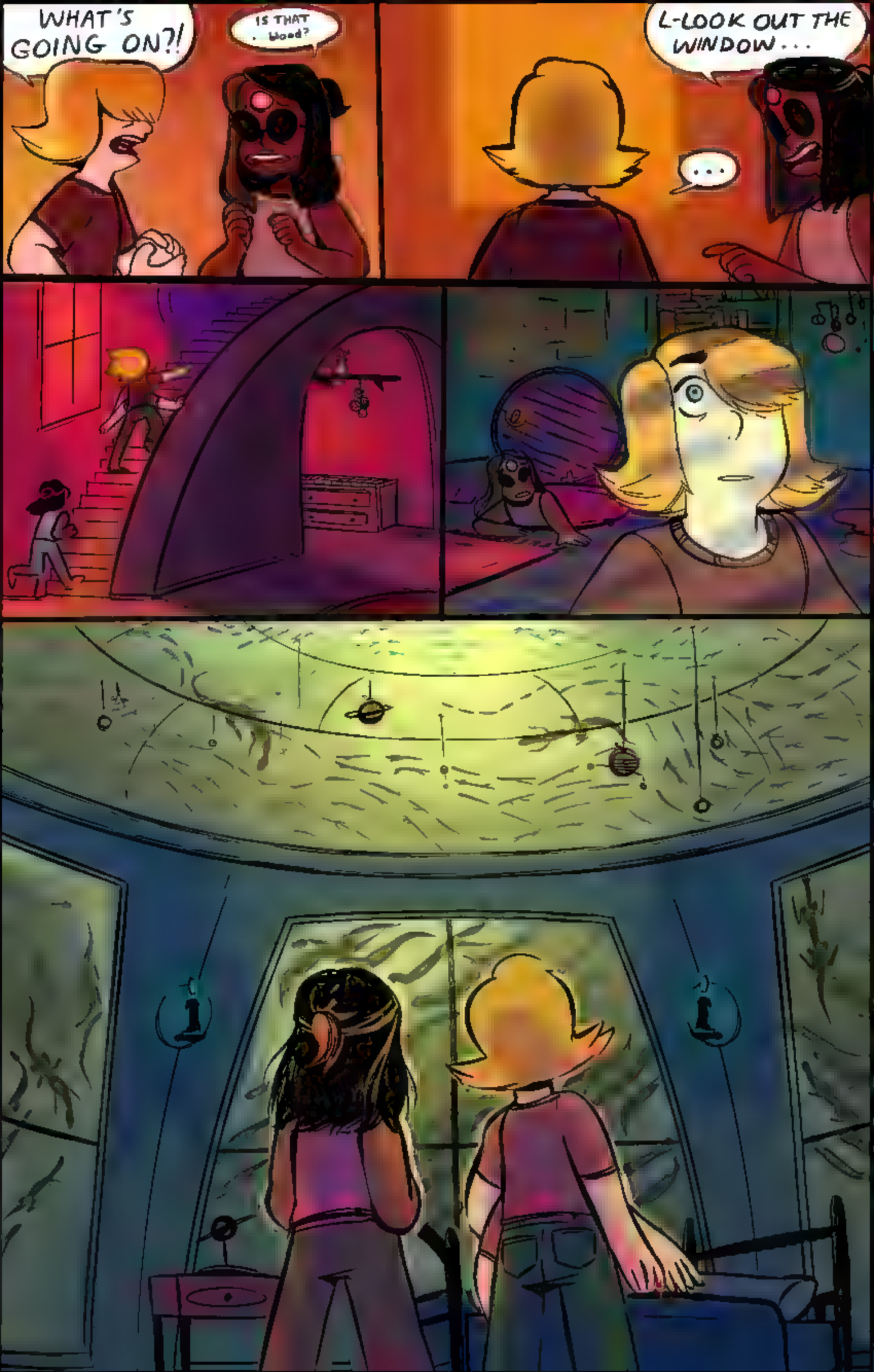
I CANT SEE THE CITY ANYMORE
OH,
BYE CITY

HOW ARE THE NOTES TREATING YA?
OK... NORN'S RESEARCH IS BASED ON STUFF THEY READ, SO-
-WELL, IT'S JUST WEIRD TO DECIPHER AT ALL, BUT I GET SOME OF IT.
I THINK MORE THINGS ARE GONNA TRY AND EAT US, SO BUSINESS AS USUAL THERE, BUT, THIS WILL DEFINITELY BE TOUGHER THAN BEFORE
WAIT, THIS IS THE FOREST? THE SPIRAL?
YEAH, I DUNNO. IT MUST BE
HMM- NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT- I HARDLY EVER HEAR ABOUT PEOPLE GOING TO THE WOODS
OH
SUPER

I'M OK WITH A BORING RIDE UP THERE, TO BE HONEST

WHAT ARE YOU, SLEEPIN'?
MAYBE. I FEEL LIKE I'M ON A SCHOOL FIELD TRIP BUS RIGHT NOW.
YOU SLEEP ON THOSE?
YEAH. WHAT'D YOU DO?
WELL, I GET A LOT OF HORROR MAGAZINES, SO I REREAD THOSE.
MAYBE . . . THE LICENSE PLATE GAME?
I FEEL LIKE WE COULD ADAPT THAT GAME TO BE ABOUT SPOTTING SOMETHING ELSE... LIKE MAYBE A CACTUS, OR SCORPIONS.
HMMMMM
YOU THINK WE COULD ACTUALLY SEE A SCORPION?
WELL, WE'VE SEEN A LOT OF STUFF
SO WHY NOT?

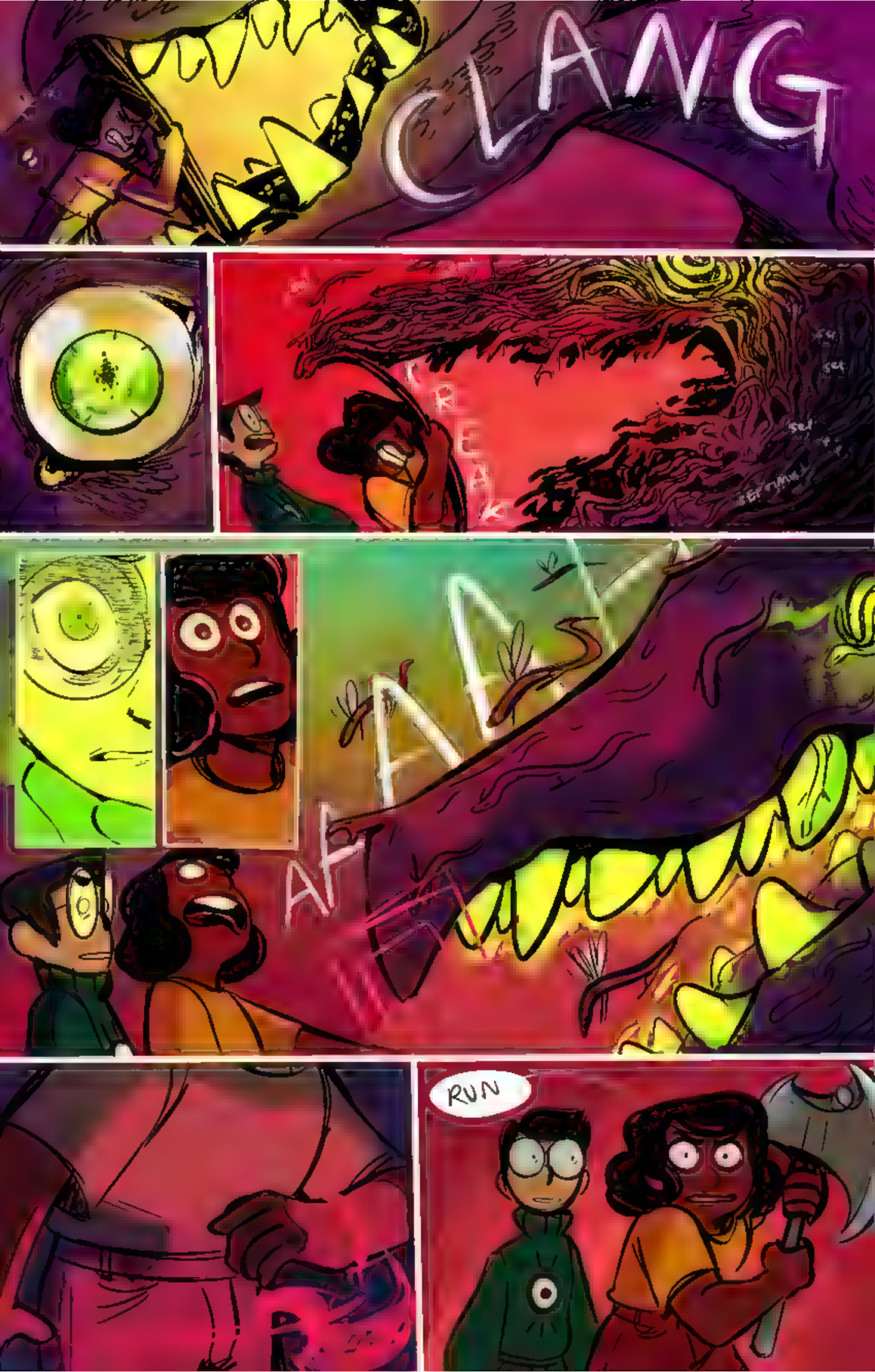
HM?
UH.. HEY?
...WHAT?!
YOU'RE LOOKING FOR SEP?
...
HE ISNT HERE
OW!!
KATE, I THINK YOU SHOULD SEE THI-


WHAT'S GOING ON?!
IS THAT . . . blood?
L-LOOK OUT THE WINDOW . . .
. . .

WHAT'S THAT UP THERE?
HM?
MISS CRAB, CAN WE STOP HERE?
OH, IT'S A - Y'KNOW, A REVERSE ISLAND
OASIS?
WELL IF YOU WANNA USE WORDS ABOUT IT
GO AHEAD AND EXPLORE - I WILL REST HERE A WHILE.
HM!
AH...!

???
SEP

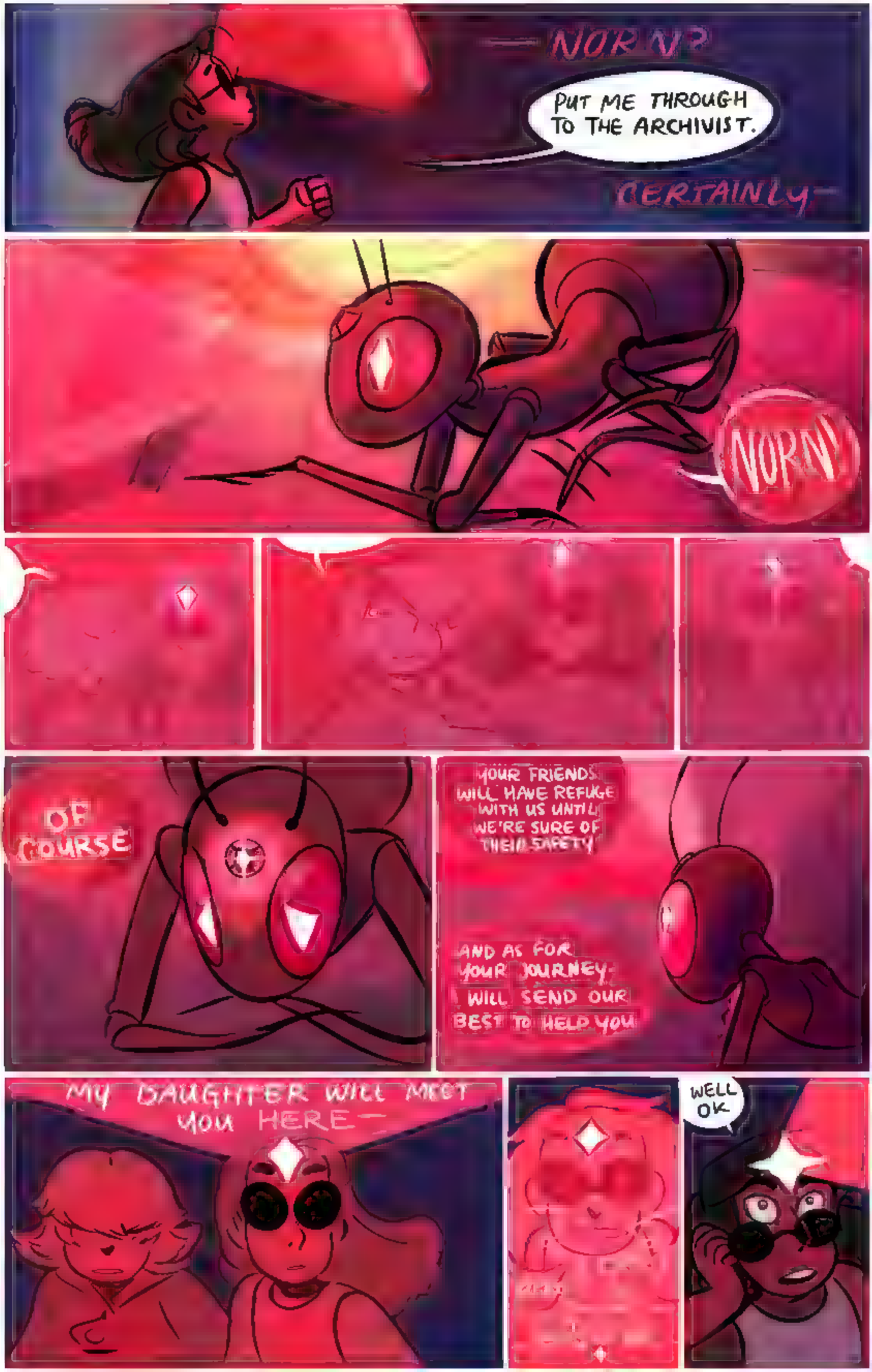
YEEESSSS?
HAVE WE, UH, MET?
ARE YOU IN MY MATH CLASS, PERHAPS?
I HAVE A FEELING LIKE MAYBE WE SHOULD GO


CLANG
RUN

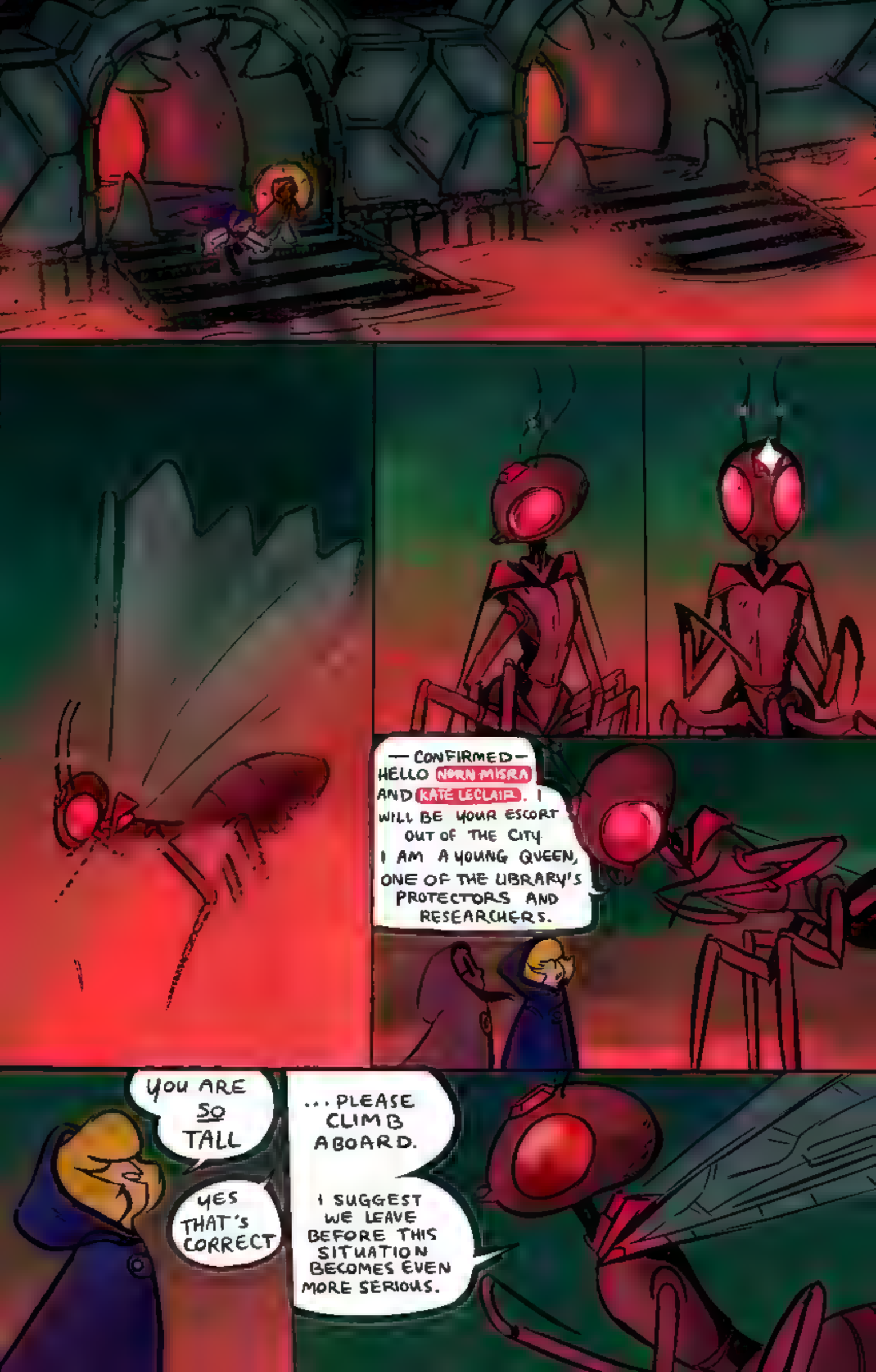
GO! ARENT YOU LISTENING-
WH- YOU HAVE TO COME TOO, STUPID!!
SMASH
THAT'S IT!! THE ONES YOU CRUSH CAN'T RE-FORM!
GETOUTTA HERE!!!

DON'T!!
SSSSSSS
HOW DARE YOU CALL ME STUPID!! YOU'RE STUPID!!
GETOFF GETOFF
CHILDPEN!!
I-IS IT COMING APART?!
PLEASE LET'S GO- I DONT THINK IT'S REALLY DEAD...
WHAT WAS THAT?!

SEP
SEP
SEPTIA...
...!!!
OH MY GOD.
.DO YOU HEAR WHAT I HEAR?
SEP
SEP
IF THEY'RE LOOKING FOR SEP, THEN-
RAINA, TOO-
WE HAVE TO GO AFTER THEM
WHAT?!
KATE- WE CAN'T DO THAT ALONE
I CAN GO BY MYSELF IF YOU WANT
WHAT ABOUT CELINE?!
W-WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?! RAINA'S OUT THERE WITH A SMALL ARSENAL- WHAT DO YOU HAVE?!
YOU REALLY THINK WE SHOULDN'T ...?
BUT-
WITH THOSE THINGS OUTSIDE, SHE MIGHT NOT BE BACK HOME FOR HOURS.
BUT THEY'RE COMING FROM ACROSS THE DESERT- THE SAME WAY RAINA AND SEP ARE GOING!
LOOK AT THIS - THEY'RE VICIOUS! IMAGINE WHAT A THOUSAND COULD DO IF THEY FIND WHO THEY'RE LOOKING FOR!
... GIVE THAT HERE.
AFTER THIS IS TAKEN CARE OF, WE LEAVE CELINE A NOTE. THEN WE CALL THE ARCHIVIST FOR HELP THEN WE'LL GO AFTER THEM.


NORN?
PUT ME THROUGH TO THE ARCHIVIST.
CERTAINLY—
NORN!
OF COURSE
YOUR FRIENDS WILL HAVE REFUGE WITH US UNTIL WE'RE SURE OF THEIR SAFETY
AND AS FOR YOUR JOURNEY, I WILL SEND OUR BEST TO HELP YOU
MY DAUGHTER WILL MEET YOU HERE—
WELL OK

I HAVE AN IDEA
THIS WILL PROTECT US
UKE A SHIELD
...
THAT SEEMS UKE IT'LL WORK
FWIP
NEARLY THERE...


— CONFIRMED —
HELLO NORN MISRA AND KATE LECLAIR. I WILL BE YOUR ESCORT OUT OF THE CITY
I AM A YOUNG QUEEN, ONE OF THE LIBRARY'S PROTECTORS AND RESEARCHERS.
YOU ARE SO TALL
YES THAT'S CORRECT
... PLEASE CLIMB ABOARD.
I SUGGEST WE LEAVE BEFORE THIS SITUATION BECOMES EVEN MORE SERIOUS.

PLEASE HOLD ON TIGHTLY, MISS HUMAN KATE MA'AM- AND-I BELIEVE NORN, THAT YOU PREFER ANOTHER HONORIFIC?
OH, RIGHT, ANTS ARE ALL GIRLS... JUST NORN, PLEASE
NORN, YES, NORN PLEASE KEEP ALL LIMBS AWAY FROM MY WINGS AS WE TAKE OFF.
WHO,6
PHISSH
YOUR CLOAK!
WOAH THERE IT GOES!
I DIDNT MEAN FOLLOW IT !!
HEY. HOW ARE WE GONNA AVOID THE SWARM?
OH MAN FLYING'S GREAT-
ARE WE GONNA FIGHT?
NO MA'AM
NOT YET

Celine,

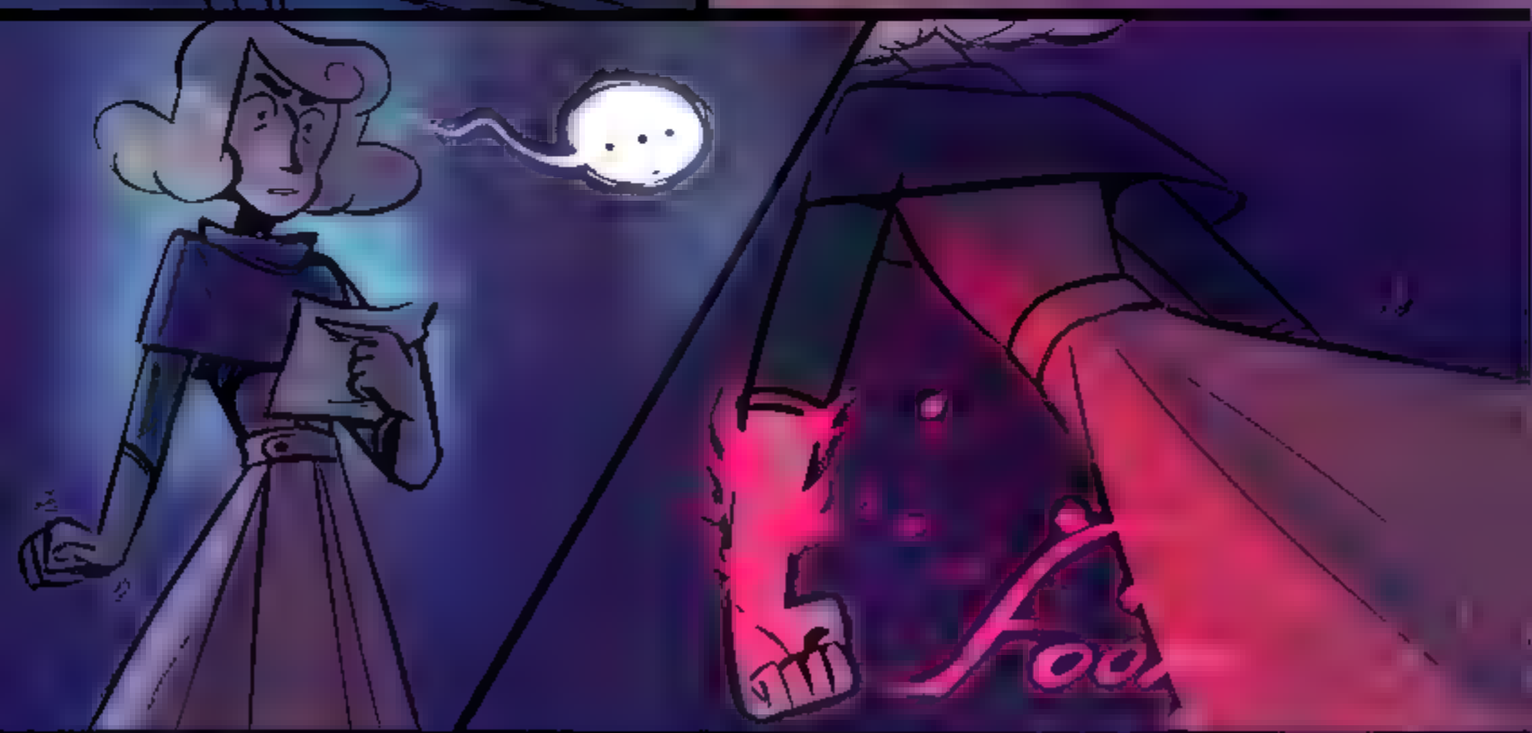
The creatures are looking for Sep and Raina. I do not know if you know this but they are. Kate and I have gone to bring them back where it is safe. (the library.)

The archivist has sent an ant to go with us. we will probably be back very soon.

If you want to reach us, talk to the archivist and she will know where we are.

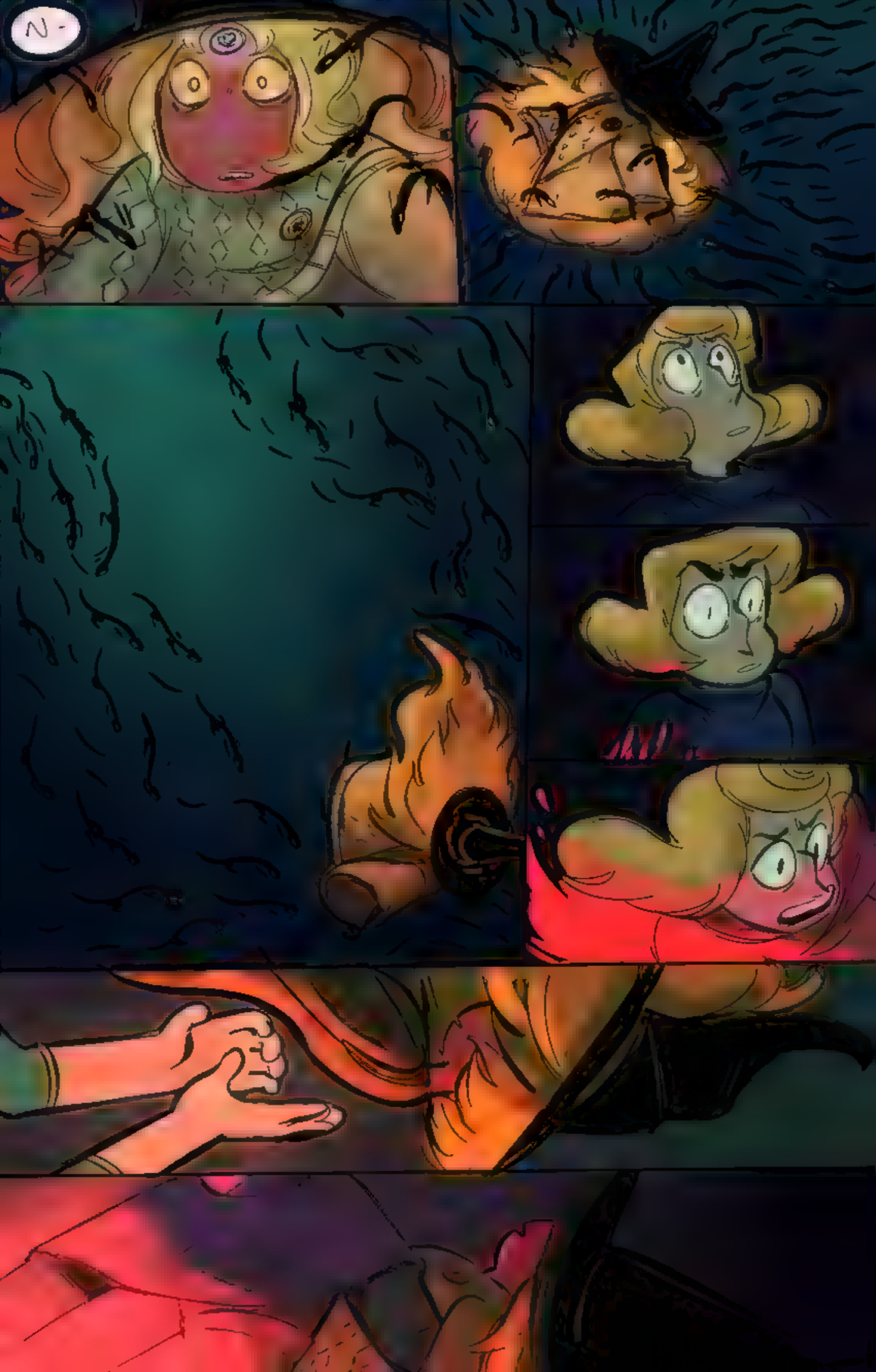
I do not think it is safe in the city so be careful. I will not leave Kate. Try not to worry.

— N@rn



OH KAPE.
UGH
STOP IT!!
HH
HHH
H
HHH

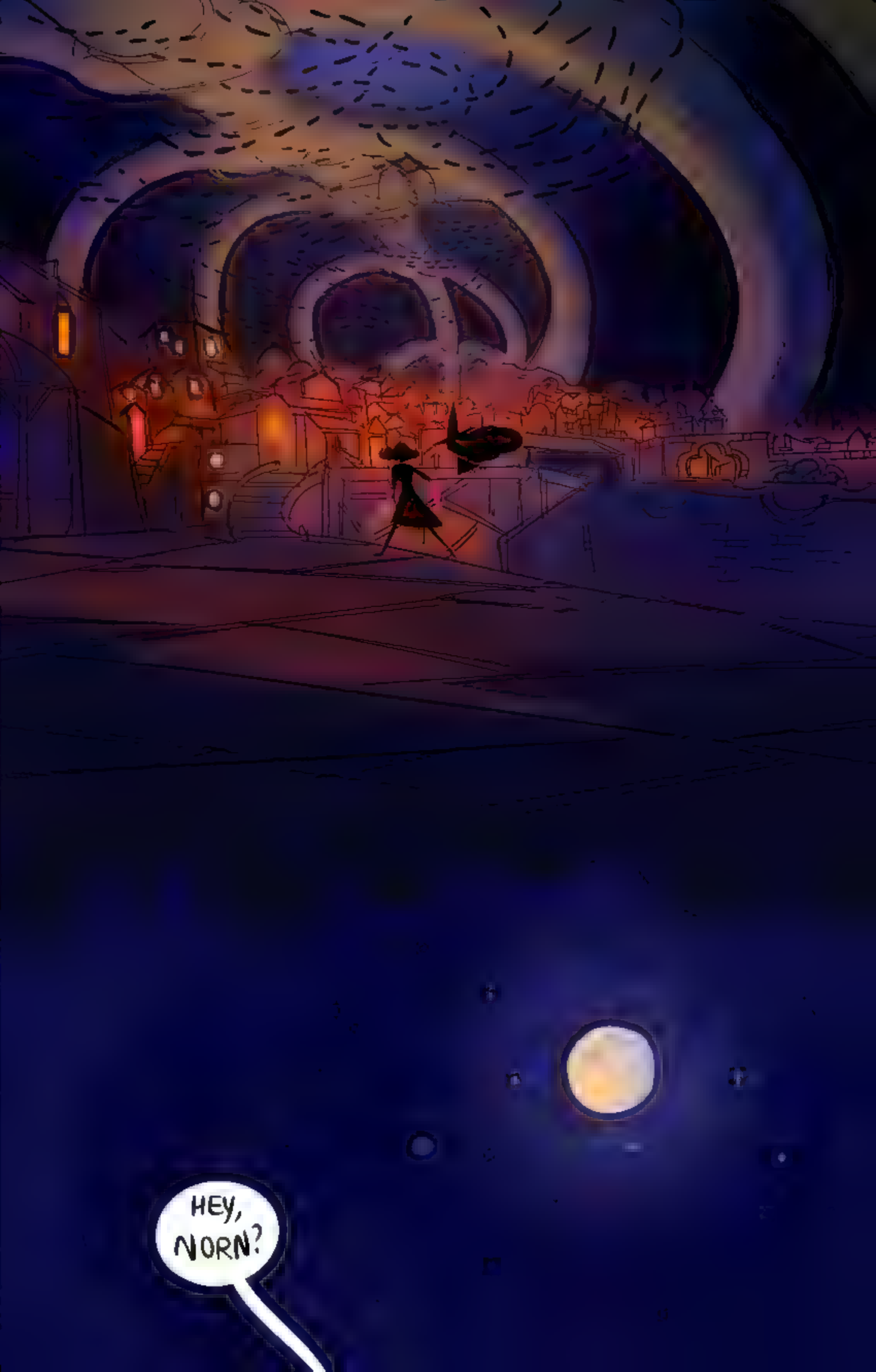
CELINE...!
WHERE'S RAI—



PANT
PANT
T-THANK YOU, MY DEAR—
IF YOU COULD HELP ME TO MY FEET—
OÙ EST—M—MY SISTER—DO YOU KNOW WHERE SHE IS?
NO
HUH—
IT SEEMS WE'RE BOTH LOOKING FOR SOMEONE.
RAINA SHOULD'VE BEEN WITH YOU BY NOW.
AND THE BOY SHE WAS BRINGING WITH HER—WHAT WAS—?
SEP?
AH YES
WELL, IF YOU SEE MY SISTER, TELL HER I'M LOOKING FOR HER. OTHERWISE, IF YOU WANT TO THANK ME FOR GETTING THOSE THINGS TO GO AWAY—JUST DO IT BY LEAVING US ALONE.
IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME
WAIT!

UGH
WHAT?!
IF YOUR SISTER WENT AFTER RAINA AND SEP, THEN IT WOULD BENEFIT US BOTH TO WORK TOGETHER ON THIS.
YOU THINK I NEED YOU?!
I THINK YOU'LL FIND HER FASTER WITH ME THAN NOT.
WELL HOW ABOUT THIS: I KNOW WHERE THEY'RE HEADED, AND YOU DON'T. I KNOW HOW TO CONTACT THEM, AND YOU CAN'T. AND I KNOW THIS PLACE BETTER THAN YOU THINK I DO.
AND I'LL TELL YOU WHAT ELSE I THINK- RAINA DIDN'T ASK YOU FOR A NAME DEAL AND YOU DID IT ANYWAY
YOU KNOW WHERE THEY ARE, DO YOU?
CELINE...
OUT OF ALL THE CHILDREN WHO ENTER THIS WORLD, HOW MANY DO YOU THINK HAVE SURVIVED UP TO NOW?
THAT'S RIDICULOUS- THEN HOW AM I STILL-
NOTHING IS FREE, CELINE.
IT IS NOT OUT OF MY POWER TO RE-SEAL YOUR ABILITIES
I HAVE NEVER HAD TO DO THAT BEFORE...
MOST OF YOU ARE WILLING TO DO A FAVOR OR TWO
THE ONLY HUMAN CHILDREN STILL ALIVE HERE HAVE EITHER DEALT WITH ME, OR TRAVEL WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS.
...

CLINK
SLAM!
RIGHT AS THE PORTAL CLOSED, SHE CALLED OUT FOR ME. AND YOU HEARD HER...
I SEE.
... IT WAS NEVER MY INTENTION TO HOLD IT OVER YOUR HEAD.
TAKING YOUR NAME GAVE YOU THE MEANS TO STAY ALIVE. AND NOW I NEED A BOON OR TWO IN RETURN. IS THAT SO HORRIBLE? PERHAPS I WOULD SLOW YOU DOWN, BUT WE BOTH BENEFIT. THAT'S THE NATURE OF OUR AGREEMENT.
WHEN MY SISTER TRADED HER NAME TO THE ARCHIVIST, IT WAS AN AGREEMENT
THEY TRUST EACH OTHER.
THIS IS BLACKMAIL.
YOU CAN THINK OF IT HOWEVER YOU WANT
YOUR SISTER IS ONE OF THE ARCHIVIST'S, SO YOU KNOW HOW THIS WORKS
TAKE ME WITH YOU, KEEP AWAY THOSE CREATURES, DO ME A FEW FAVORS
ONCE WE'VE DONE WHAT I NEED DONE, YOU'LL BE FREE TO FIND YOUR SISTER.
I PROMISE— IF YOU WORK WITH ME UNTIL I FIND RAINA, I WILL LEAVE YOU TO WHATEVER FATE YOU CHOOSE
...THEN LET'S FINISH THIS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.


HEY, NORN?

NORN? HEY.
MUUHZAA
YOU WERE SLEEPING
OH WE ARE ON AN ANT IN THE AIR
I, TOO, AM TIRED. I WILL LAND AT THAT STRUCTURE BELOW TO REST FOR A WHILE.
I KNOW WE CANT FLY FOREVER. BUT I HOPE RAINA AND SEP DONT GET TOO FAR AWAY...
WE'RE FLYING THEY'RE ON THE GROUND.. WE'LL CATCH UP—
MM
WAH
AAAA

COOL
OH...
IS THERE A WAY WE CAN START A FIRE?
HM. WELL, IT'S NOT WARM, BUT IT'S VERY HOME-Y
OH!
HOW DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS PLACE, YQ?
WOW...
YQ?
YQ= YOUNG QUEEN
THIS ONE ME
ONE OF MY SISTERS WAS ONCE HERE ON A RESEARCH TRIP. AT ONE TIME, THIS PLACE MARKED A BORDER BETWEEN MAGICAL TERRITORIES.

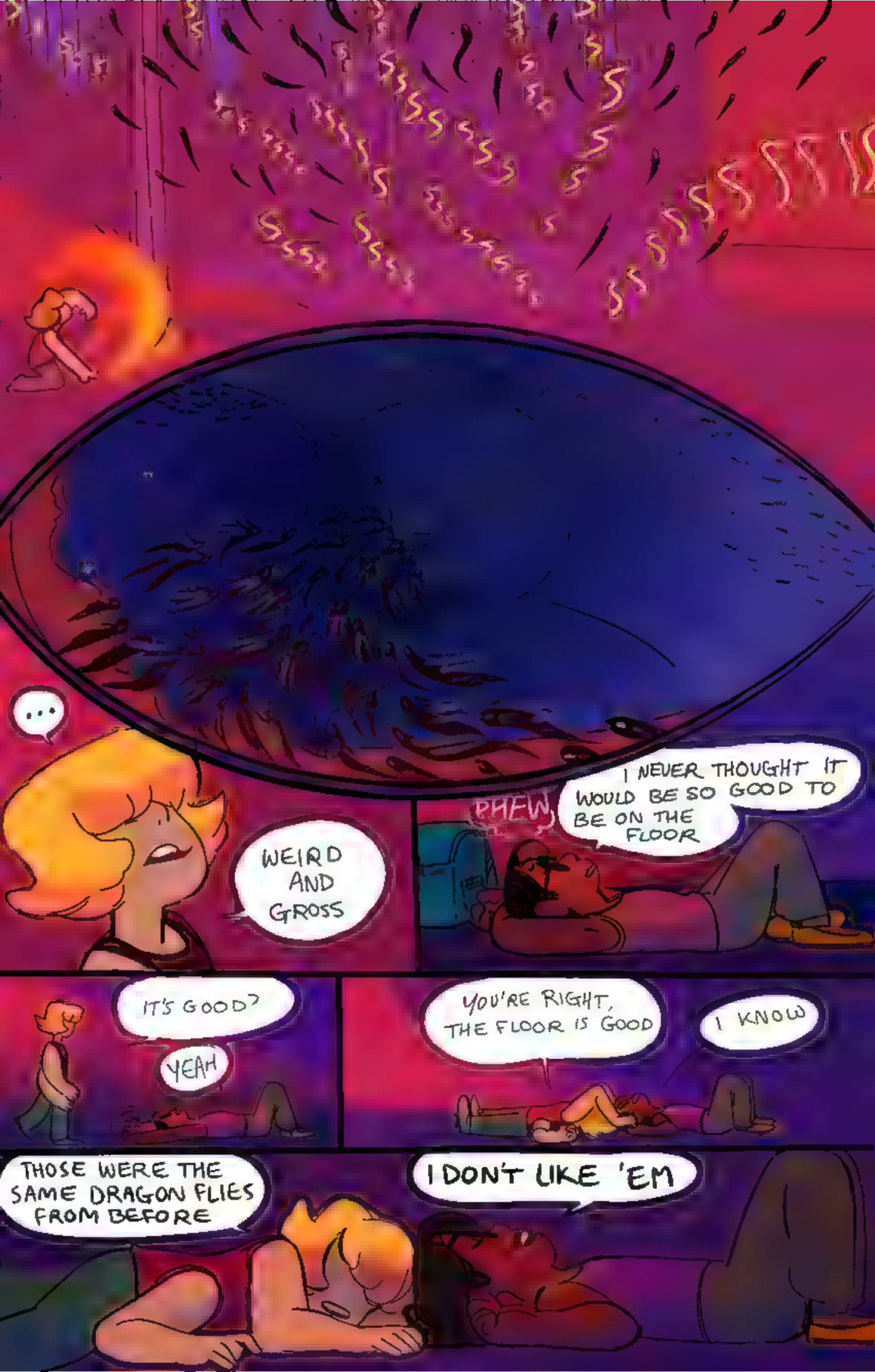
THE MARKINGS SHOW A FEW OF THE OLD DIVISIONS
THERE ARE NO LONGER SO MANY DENIZENS WHO CAN MAINTAIN THEIR HOLD ON ANY MAGIC OUTSIDE THEIR OWN BODIES. OUR LIBRARY IS AN EXCEPTION.
SO THE ARCHIVIST HAS THE LIBRARY. AND SO NORN'S AND MY MAGIC IS STRONGER THERE CAUSE SHE'S STRONG
YOU'RE MOSTLY RIGHT, BUT THE ARCHIVIST'S COMMAND OVER OUR HOME IS A RESULT OF THE LINK OUR FORMICARY SHARES. ALONE, NONE OF US WOULD BE ENOUGH, BUT TOGETHER, WE ARE POWERFUL. YOU AND NORN ARE PART OF THIS TOO, NOW
IN FACT, IT MAY BE THAT NORNS POWERS AND MINE ARE THE SAME.. IF THEY WANTED TO, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO CREATE A TEMPORARY BUBBLE WHERE YOUR OWN POWERS WORK
OH!!
CAN WE TEST IT AND SEE?
SSSS

BYE, HISSING THING! BYE!!
LET'S ROLL, KIDS
SSSSSSSSSSSSSSS
GET BEHIND ME
I'M TOO EXHAUSTED TO FLY WITH PASSENGERS.
WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO FIGHT
...
THAT MAY ATTRACT SOME ATTENTION
WE'VE ALREADY GOT ATTENTION, I THINK.
WHAT WERE YOU SAYING ABOUT MY POWERS...?
WE'VE GOT NO CHOICE BUT TO CAST THE MOST FORBIDDEN ANT MAGICS AVAILABLE.

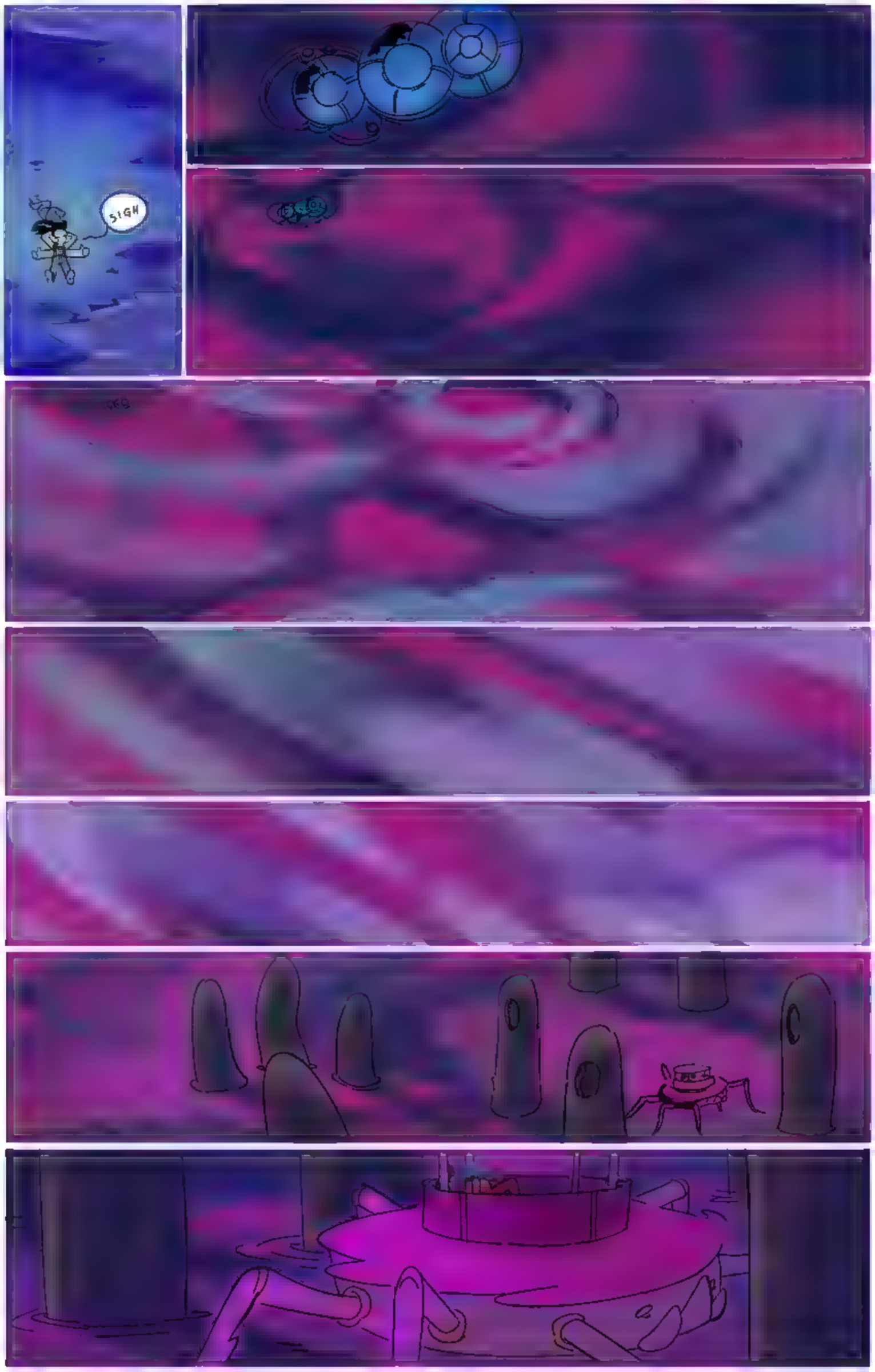
Hsssssss
OH GROSS DUDE
EUGH

RIP
HAHAHAH
HAA
HA
YEAH

GUHP
BE FAST, I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I CAN DO THIS!
WHAP
NOTED
GASP GASP
ZOOM


...
WEIRD AND GROSS
PHEW
I NEVER THOUGHT IT WOULD BE SO GOOD TO BE ON THE FLOOR
IT'S GOOD?
YEAH
YOU'RE RIGHT, THE FLOOR IS GOOD
I KNOW
THOSE WERE THE SAME DRAGON FLIES FROM BEFORE
I DON'T LIKE 'EM

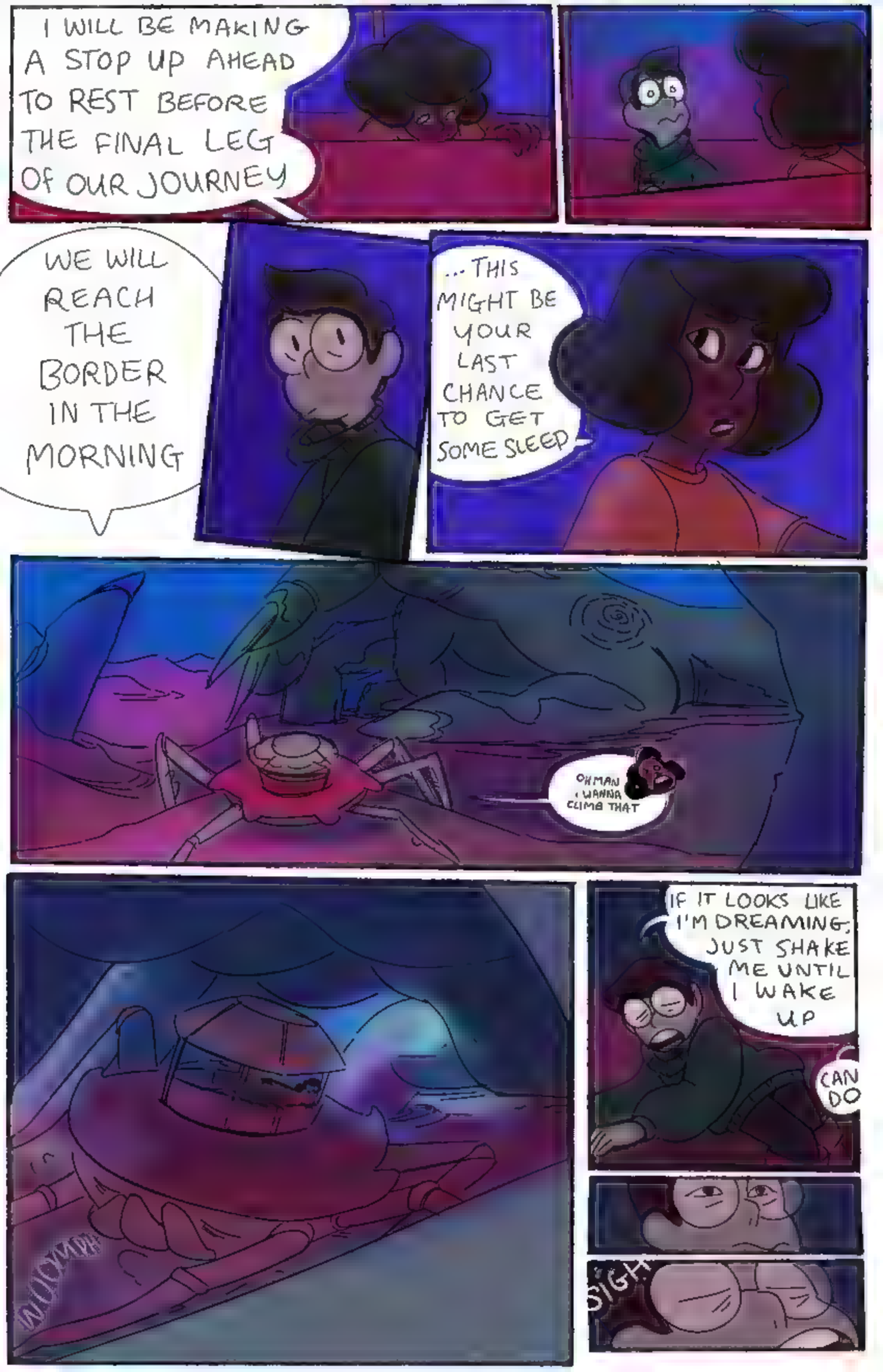
DO YOU THINK IT WAS LOOKING FOR SEP, LIKE THE OTHER ONE?
I DUNNO THEY ALL SEEMED TO BE AFTER HIM
IT WAS.. TOO EASY TO GET RID OF IT. LIKE IT WASN'T SPOSED TO BE HERE.
HM
YOU OK, YQ?
WE WILL ALL BE BETTER AFTER A REST
FLOP
FLOP
HM


SIGH

SIGH
HEY, WHAT'S UP, DUDE?
NOTHIN' I'M JUST-TIRED.
S'AT ALL?
GET SOME SLEEP, YA WOOLY CATERPILLAR. DON'T WORRY ABOUT WATCHING OUT FOR MONSTERS - I'M A LIGHT SLEEPER.
CAUSE OF ALL THE MONSTER ATTACKS
HA HA HA HA
OHH NO
OH YES
RAINA, YOU EVER HAVE LIKE, REALLY BAD NIGHTMARES?
SOMETIMES
LIKE,
UM,
I...
IS IT REALLY SO BAD YOU DON'T WANNA SLEEP?
IT'S NOT THAT THEY'RE BAD. THEY FEEL REAL
WHENEVER I GO TO SLEEP, IT FEELS LIKE SOMETHING'S THERE, WATCHING, TALKING TO ME... IT'S LIKE I'M AWAKE. I DONT — Mm
SORRY, THIS IS STUPID

NO!
THAT IS NOT STUPID. IN A PLACE LIKE THIS. YOU HAVE TO TRUST YOURSELF.
IF YOU SAY IT'S REAL, THEN I BELIEVE YOU.
YEAH?
YEAH
THAT WAS SOME ANGRY COMFORTING, BUT IT WORKED
HA HA
SCOOT
THERE HAS TO BE A WAY TO DEAL WITH IT.
BECAUSE YOU DEFINITELY HAVE TO SLEEP.
I KNOOOOW
I THINK IF YOU DON'T SLEEP YOU CAN, LIKE, DIE, MAYBE...?
...
SEP.. TELL ME ABOUT YOUR DREAM

YEESH
YEAAAAAAAAH
WE HAVE TO COME UP WITH SOME THINGS FOR YOU TO TRY WHILE YOU'RE ASLEEP
TRY WHAT, HIDING?
I DUNNO, IT'S WORTH A DANG SHOT.
I MEAN, YOU KNOW HOW TO DO IT
EXCUSE ME, CHILDREN


I WILL BE MAKING A STOP UP AHEAD TO REST BEFORE THE FINAL LEG OF OUR JOURNEY
WE WILL REACH THE BORDER IN THE MORNING
...THIS MIGHT BE YOUR LAST CHANCE TO GET SOME SLEEP
OH MAN I WANNA CLIMB THAT
IF IT LOOKS LIKE I'M DREAMING, JUST SHAKE ME UNTIL I WAKE UP
CAN DO
SIGH

AH
THE BOY THINKS
HE CAN HIDE FROM ME

HEY... SEP?
YOU SAID TO WAKE YOU UP IF IT SEEMED LIKE SOMETHING BAD WAS HAPPENING
. THANKS
WHERE ARE WE?
WE'RE NEARLY AT THE EDGE
THE EDGE?
RAINA, WE'RE NOT GOING IN THE CRACK, ARE WE? BECAUSE I DONT THINK I CAN HANDLE THAT RIGHT NOW
WHAT
"THE CRACK"
OH YES, I SEE YOUR SHREWD GAME. A CRACK SUCH AS A BUTT. YOU THINK I'D LAUGH AT SUCH THINGS
SO THEN- HOW WILL WE GET ACROSS?

HAD A SAFE TRIP, THEN?
OH!
SAME OL SAME 'OL
HOW'RE THINGS DOWN THERE?
THE CRACKS ARE GETTING DEEPER. I WAS ABLE TO HEAR MY BROTHER!! HE HAD A NEW RIDDLE FOR ME!
IS THE ANSWER SILENCE?
WELL AREN'T YOU A COUPLE OF KNOW-IT-ALLS.

OH FINE. JUST GO ON ACROSS AND RUIN ALL MY RIDDLE FUN. MAYBE YOU SHOULD LIVE IN THIS HOLE.

NO THANKS

BYE KIDS!

HEY!

THANKS FOR THE RIDE!

THANK YOU!

KEEP SAFE IN THE FOREST, NOW! DON'T GET YOURSELF EATEN!

WE'LL TRY

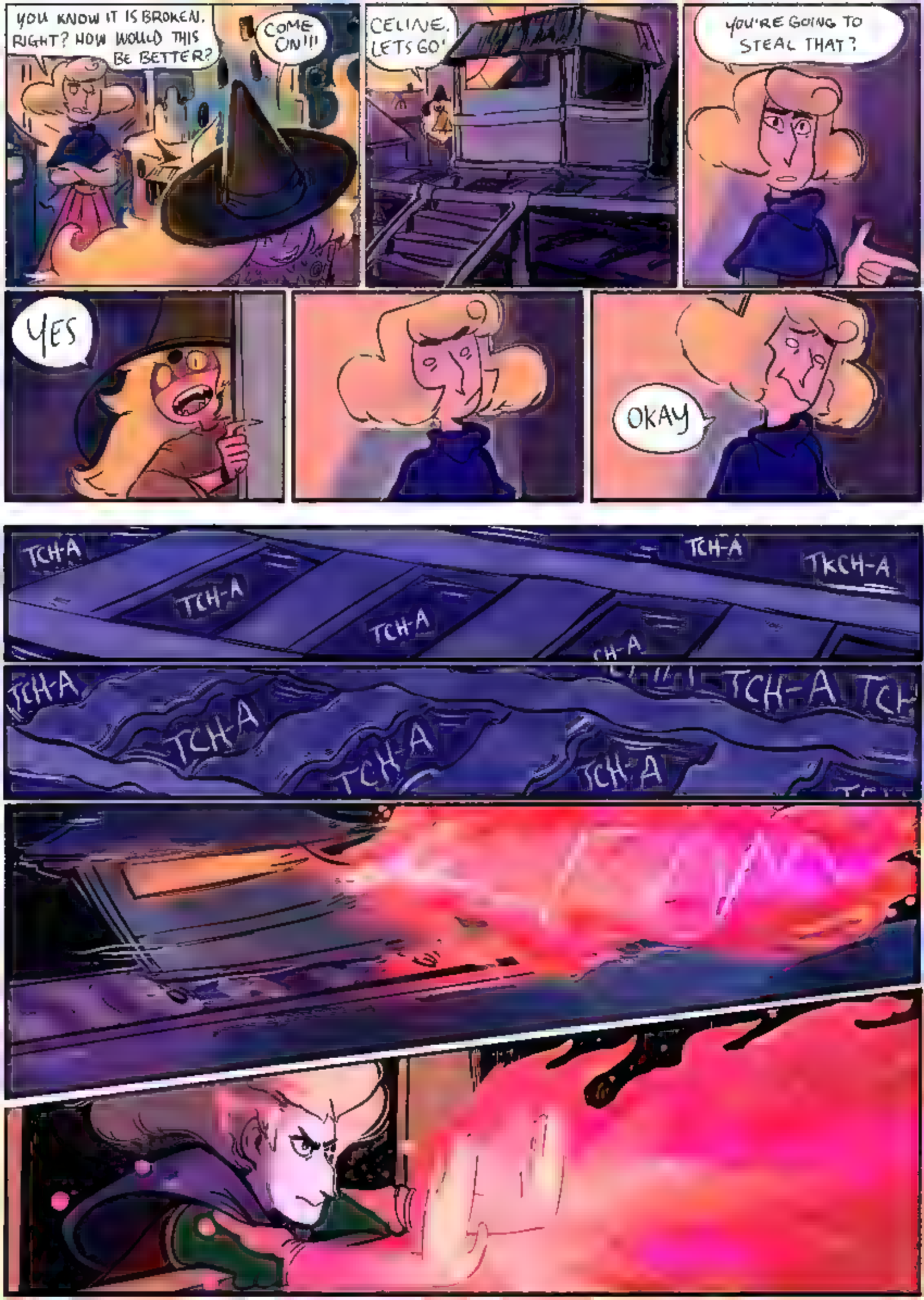
DO YOU WANNA...

UHH.

CLIP

HM, THAT'S GOOD
WHAT?
YOUR POWERS WORK HERE, WAS WORRIED ONCE WE CAME TO A NEW AREA THEY D. DIMINISH, OR SOMETHING. KATE'S AND NORN'S ARE SPOSED TO HAVE LIMITS I HOPE WE DON'T FIND OUT WHAT YOUR LIMITS ARE
I HAD A WEIRD FEELING ABOUT THIS PLACE... WHAT IF IT BELONGED TO THE NAME-EATER, LIKE THE LIBRARY BELONGS TO THE ANTS?
FEEL WE RD HERE TOO BUT I FIGURED T WAS BECAUSE I'VE NEVER BEEN HERE BEFORE
I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU FEEL THAT WAY. I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS PLACE
RAINA..?
YEAH?
WHEN WE REACH THE NAME EATER.. WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO?
I HAVEN'T... I GOTTA FIGURE THAT OUT

AND YOU DONT GO WITH HER? YOUR MAGIC IS POWERFULLY OFFENSIVE
IT WOULDNT WORK IN THE ANTHILL ANYWAY.
BESIDES... IT'S SAFEST IF I NEVER USE MY POWERS TO FIGHT. WHEN I LASH OUT...
WELL, LIKE YOU SAID. IT'S POWERFUL. I COULD LOSE CONTROL
YOUR POWERS WILL WORK ANYWHERE IF I AM WITH YOU
...
... THE TROLLEY ISNT RUNNING
IT'S TOO FAR TO WALK... I DIDNT PLAN FOR THIS
WE'LL THINK OF SOMETHING
HM... I SUPPOSE.. FLYING WOULD MAKE US TOO VULNERABLE
ER. I CANNOT FLY..
PSST. WELL
OH! THERE!


YOU KNOW IT IS BROKEN, RIGHT? HOW WOULD THIS BE BETTER?
COME ON!!!
CELINE, LETS GO
YOU'RE GOING TO STEAL THAT?
YES
OKAY
TCH-A
TCH-A
TCH-A
TkCH-A
CH-A
TCH-A
TCH-A
TCH-A
TCH-A
TCH-A
TCH-A
TCH

THANK GOODNESS THE OTHER CARS AREN'T RUNNING
YEAH?
WE'RE GOING TOO FAST, ESSIE.
NONSENSE!
THIS IS FUN!
HUMANS ARE SO INTERESTING!
THIS WASN'T MY IDEA!!!
FOOM
CRAK
KAA

THUD
THUNK
essie
FLÛTE DE ZUT
UGH

ARENT WE CLOSE, THOUGH?
I THOUGHT YOU WANTED THIS OVER QUICKLY
HMPH
HEY!! WAIT A SECOND!

WHAT?
LOOK BEHIND YOU SEE THE BARRIER?
I NEED YOU TO BURN US A WAY THROUGH
I CAN BURN THAT?
IT'S LIKE ANYTHING THINGS BURN
AFTER YOU BOSS
OH, BOSS PSSHAW
THERE'S NO NEED TO THINK OF ME THAT WAY, CELINE
OH SHE WILL KNOW YOU DID THAT, THOUGH
HEH.
WELL, WHAT IS SHE GOING TO DO, SEND ANTS?

KNOK
KNOK
KNOK
I NEED TO SPEAK TO THE QUEEN
OH?
SEND HER UP

HELLO, CELINE

NORN TOLD ME YOU MIGHT BE VISITING

THEY DIDN'T MENTION YOU'D BE BRINGING YOUR FIRE WITH YOU.

INTO MY LIBRARY

MADAME I NEVER INTENDED TO USE IT

THEY ALSO DIDN'T TELL ME THAT YOU'D HAVE WITH A COMPANION

I, DO NOT

IT IS

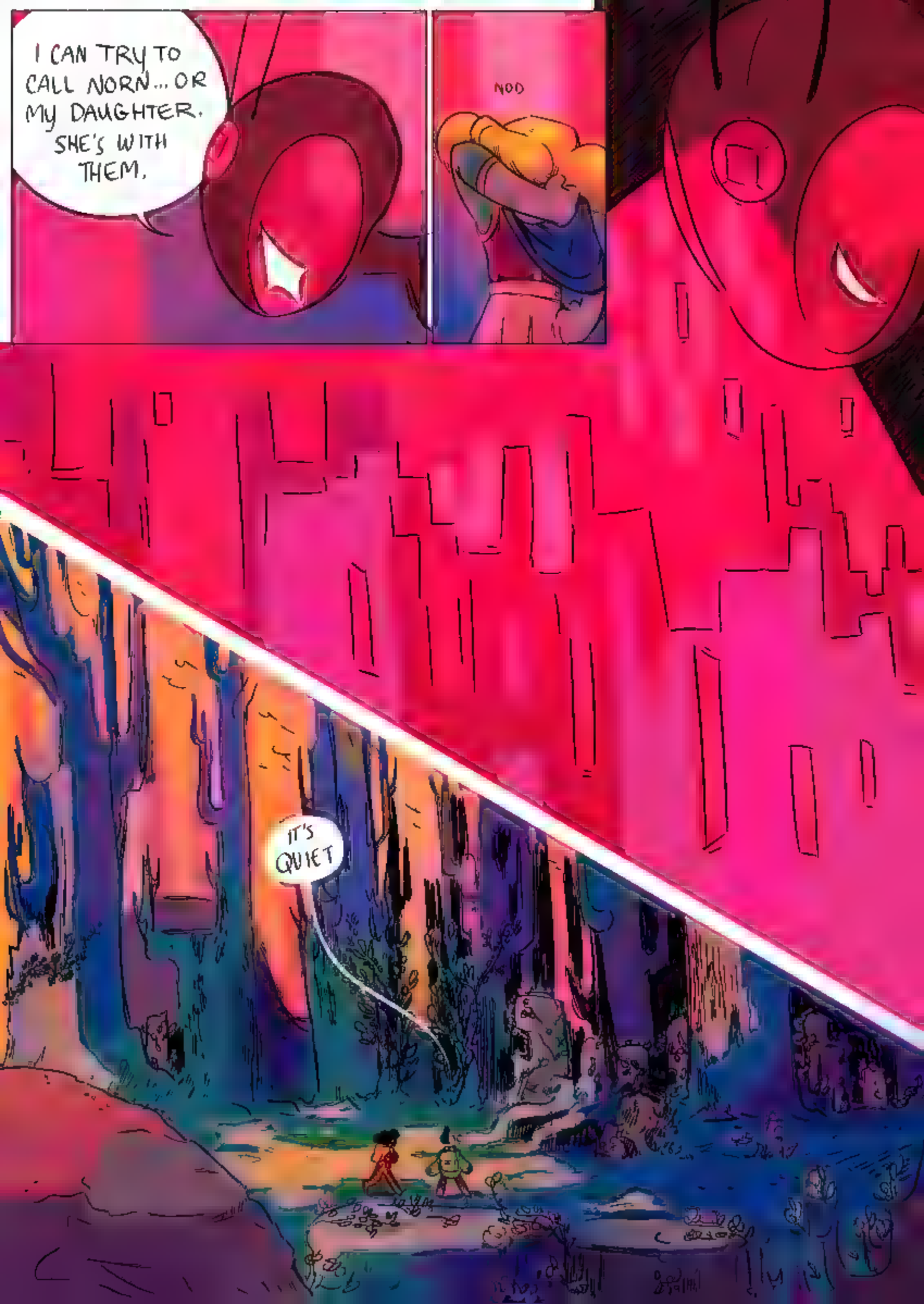
ARCHIVIST

GHH

I NEED TO KNOW WHERE MY SISTER IS. PLEASE.

I KNOW WE DON'T KNOW EACH OTHER VERY WELL

BUT YOU AND I ARE THE ONLY ONES TRYING TO REALLY PROTECT HER.


I CAN TRY TO CALL NORN... OR MY DAUGHTER. SHE'S WITH THEM.
NOD
IT'S QUIET

YES THE SENSE OF STILLNESS IS PALPABLE IN THIS MYSTERIOUS FOREST—
—THAT WE'LL BE EXPLORING TODAY. TAKING A LOOK.
— AT SOME TRULY FASCINATING CREATURES. SUCH AS THIS MOSS
CREEPING ALONG LIKE GANGBUSTERS DOWN THERE
TOWARDS THESE—
FOSSIL TOES STICKIN' OUT
WHAT'S THE POINT OF THIS? SCIENCE DOESN'T KNOW
BUT WE'LL UNRAVEL THIS MYSTERY... SOMEDAY
BUT SOME OF THE MOST REMARKABLE THINGS OF THE FOREST ARE YET UNREVEALED-
AND HERE'S SOME SORT OF CREATURE
NOW A SWEEPING SHOT THROUGH THE CANOPY.

WHAT?
YOU'RE NOT GONNA TRY AND CLIMB
THINK ABOUT IT
IF THIS PLACE IS A HUGE SPIRAL THEN IT'LL BE EASY TO GET LOST
BUT IF WE LOOK AT IT FROM HIGH UP—
WE'LL BE ABLE TO SEE THE CENTER
HEY
HM?
I'LL BE RIGHT WITH YOU ON THIS TREE SITUATION
I'M A REALLY EXPERIENCED TREE CLIMBING PERSON
HURF
AND I'VE NEVER REALLY BEEN SCARED OF HEIGHTS
HA HA
I'M ACTUALLY NOT ALLOWED TO CLIMB TREES AT HOME

"TOO DANGEROUS" HA HA
ITS PRETTY FUNNY
WHAT? YOU?
WELL I HURT MYSELF ONCE IT WAS DUMB
IT'S MY OWN FAULT REALLY
MY MOM SAYS I'M RECKLESS. I WENT TOO HIGH
IF YOU THINK ABOUT WHAT I ENDED UP DOING - HERE I MEAN - IT'S FUNNY.
HUFF

WAH!
POP

RAINA,

LOOK

THEY LOOK LIKE BUBBLES COMING UP FROM UNDERWATER- DONT THEY?

SEP?

WHAT?

LET'S GO BACK DOWN. OK?

OK. IT'S COLD UP HERE

WE SHOULD TAKE A LITTLE BREAK
HMM HMMM..
LOOK AT THIS BUG
HEY BUG
DO YOU KNOW THERE'S A BIG HOLE IN THIS WOODS?
YEAH
YEAH,!!!

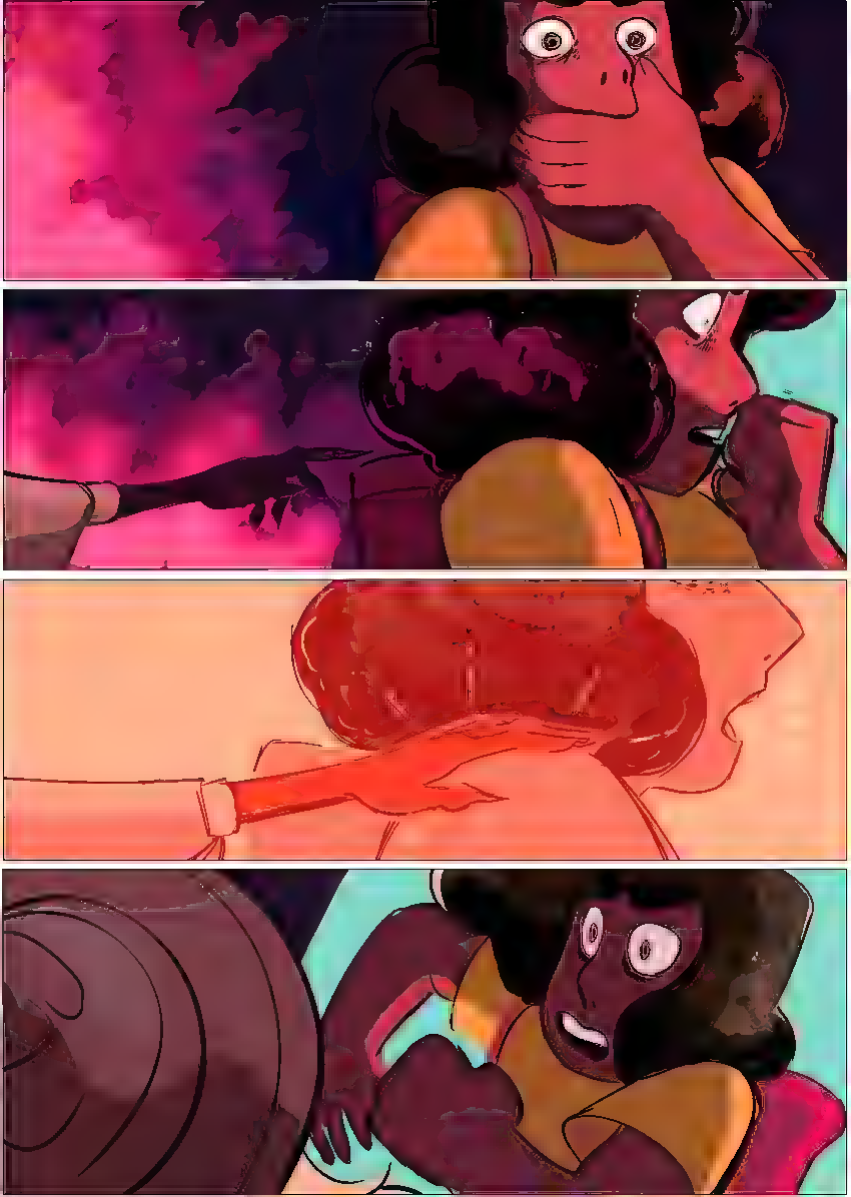
YEAH!! YEAHA!! YEAH YEAH YEAH!!
HAHA
HOW DID YOU EVER GET USED TO THIS PLACE?!
OH JEEZE, AM I USED TO IT?
YEA YEAH YEAH YEAH YEA
HAHA... MAYBE I'M USED TO IT BECAUSE OF LIVING IN THE DEMON CITY ALL THAT TIME
WAIT WITH CELINE AND KATE?
YEAH!
I THOUGHT YOU KNEW THAT?

CMON LET'S WALK
WAIT- TELL ME ABOUT LIVING IN THE CITY
YOU'VE BEEN THERE
YOU NEVER TOLD ME WHAT IT WAS LIKE WHEN YOU FIRST GOT HERE! AND I'M BORED!
I HAVEN'T SEEN A TV SHOW IN DAYS
STUFF I DID IS NOT A TV SHOW
CMON- HOW'D YOU MEET EVERYBODY
...
OR YOU COULD TELL ME IF YOU.. L!!!IKE ANYONE
THE FINAL STRIKE!!!!

FOR SO LONG WE'VE LIVED AMONGST MONSTERS...
BUT THE TRUE MONSTER, SEP— THE TRUE MONSTER...
IS YOU
HA
JUST KIDDING, I KNOW WHO YOU LIKE
OH THAT'S FOR SURE WORSE THAN YOU ASKING
WAIT-IS IT OBVIOUS?
OH MY GOD SEP
HMMM?
I'LL TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT IF YOU SHUT UP
WAIT MY BACKPACK FELL OFF WHEN I DID THAT
AND ANYWAY-I MET ESSIE BEFORE ANYONE ELSE.

RUSTLE

AT FIRST I THOUGHT I'D TURN A CORNER AND MY HOUSE WOULD BE THERE—
— STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE WILDERNESS

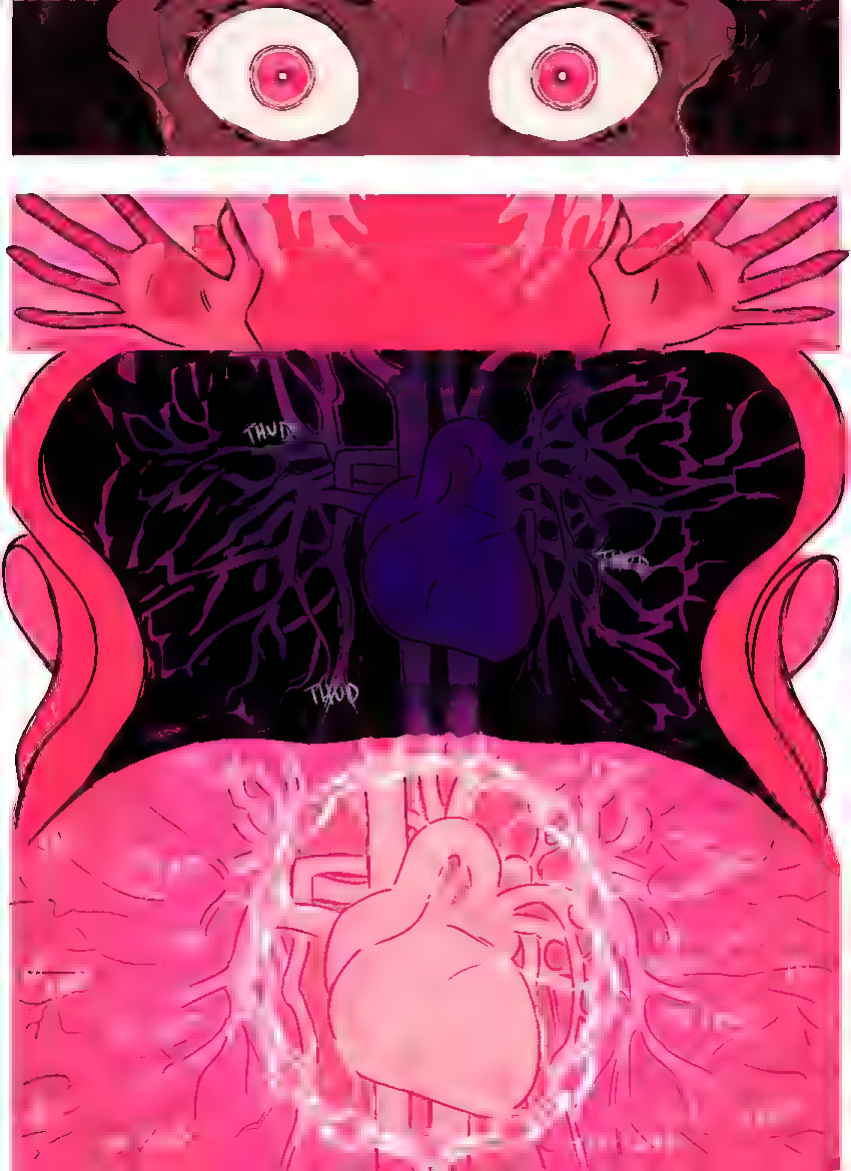


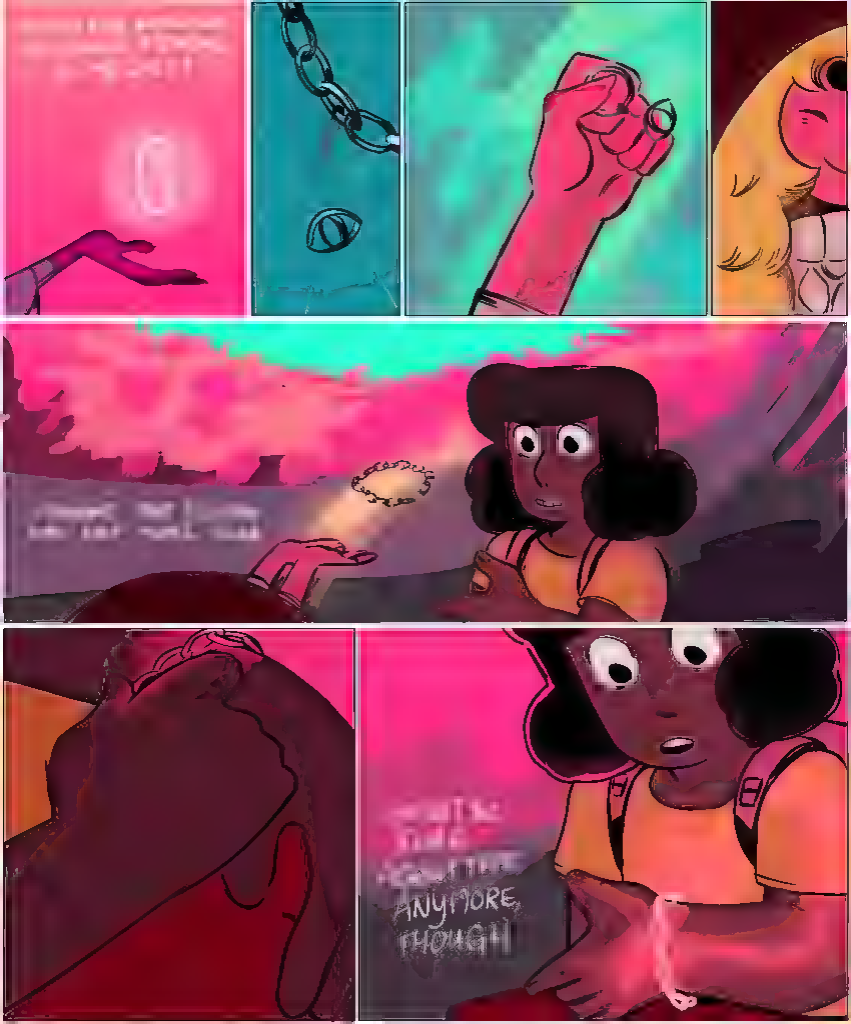
STEP

GRACIOUS ARE YOU OK?
I.
UM
I.
PERHAPS YOU SHOULD SIT DOWN- AH—
AWAY FROM THE CLIFF?
HE HE
THIS WAY
THAT'S BETTER!
THANK YOU
OH HAHA
...
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

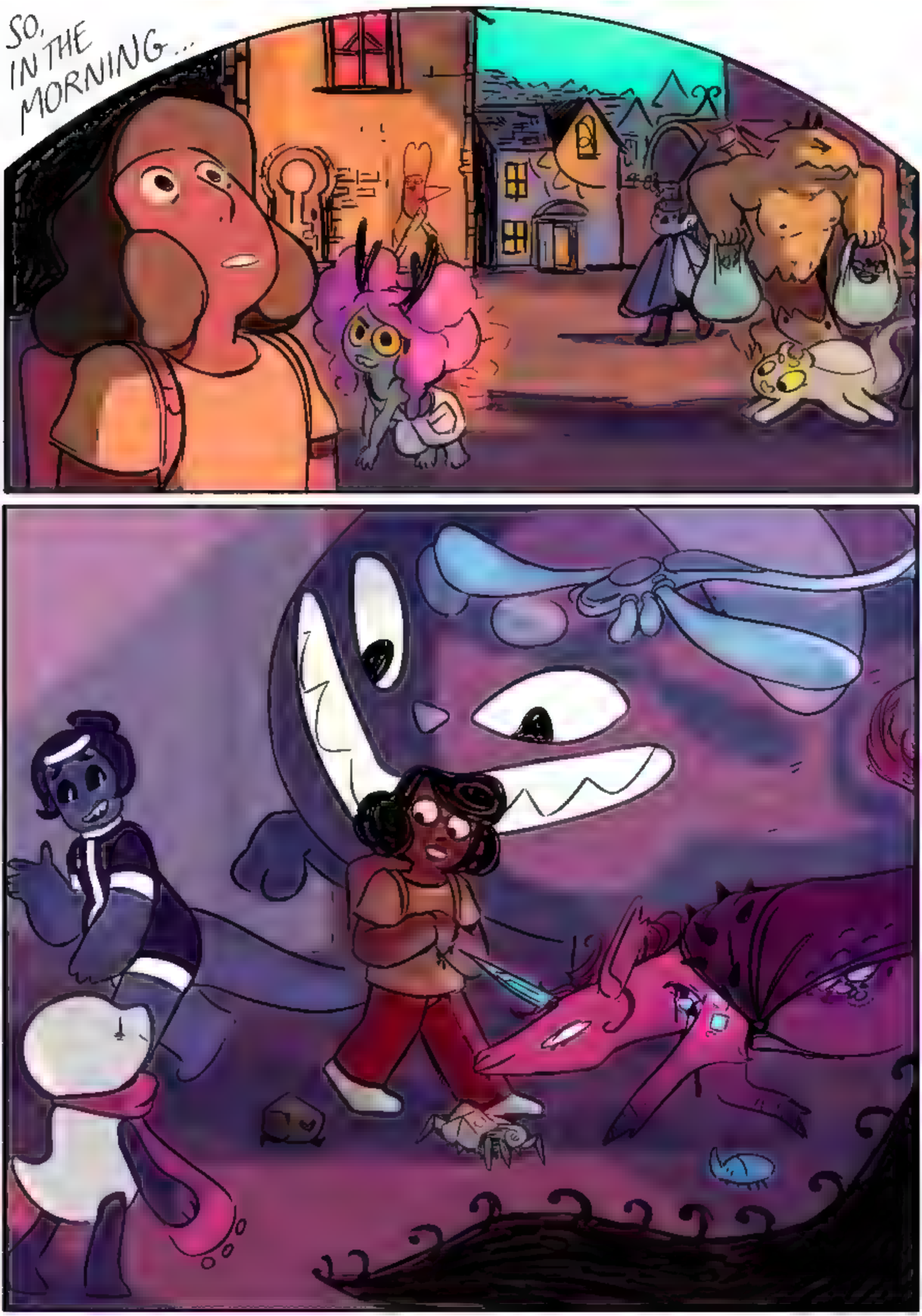
MY NAME'S RAINA DIAZ
I AM NAMED ESSIE!
NICE TO MEET YOU ESSIE
I'M HAPPY TO MEET YOU TOO RAINA
PLEASE- WHERE'S MY HOUSE- MY FAMILY.
HAVE YOU SEEN ANYONE
HAVE YOU SEEN MY PARENTS? HAVE YOU SEEN ANY HUMAN PEOPLE?
THEY BOTH WEAR GLASSES - MY MOM HAS HAIR LIKE MINE
THEY'RE BOTH TALL
RAINA - I'M SORRY. I DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY ARE

SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED TO MY HOME TOO- THIS WHOLE WORLD IS CRACKING AND OPENING UP. AND I DONT KNOW HOW MUCH PRESSURE IT CAN TAKE
AT FIRST I THOUGHT IT WAS AN ANOMALY - BUT THE DAMAGE TO THIS PLACE IS ENORMOUS
I'VE BEEN RUSHING FROM PORTAL TO PORTAL ALL DAY TRYING TO CATCH ALL THE LOST COMING THROUGH. I CAN CLOSE THE RIFTS. BUT THE DAMAGE IS DONE
ALL THE LOST... PEOPLE?
IF THERE ARE OTHER HUMANS HERE, I NEED TO GO TO THEM
RAINA, IF YOU AGREE TO HELP ME, I'LL BE ABLE TO HELP YOU
HELP YOU?
I WANT TO GIVE YOU A GIFT THAT WILL HELP YOU PROTECT YOURSELF.
AND I CAN SHOW YOU HOW TO FIND THE OTHERS.
WHAT DO YOU NEED ME TO DO?
NOTHING YET- I'M IN A HURRY I'LL FIND YOU AGAIN
I DONT UNDERSTAND
WHAT WILL YOU WANT FROM ME THEN?
VERY LITTLE. I WANT TO HELP YOU. RAINA I'M AFRAID OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I DONT
I'VE ALREADY LET SOME HUMANS GO WITHOUT MY PROTECTION
AND I AM AFRAID THAT WAS A MISTAKE
I'M AFRAID OF WHAT THEIR FATE WILL BE
...
..
. . . OKAY


THUD
THUD


ANYMORE
THOUGH

AND THERE WAS NO WAY BACK, EITHER.
AND I GUESS I DIDN'T WANT TO MEET MORE MONSTERS YET.
AND - I DON'T KNOW HOW
BUT-
SOMEHOW, MORE THAN ANYTHING,
BEING ABLE TO USE MY
IF I COULD DO MAGIC, THEN I REALLY WAS FAR FROM HOME.
I SLEPT IN THE WOODS THAT NIGHT.

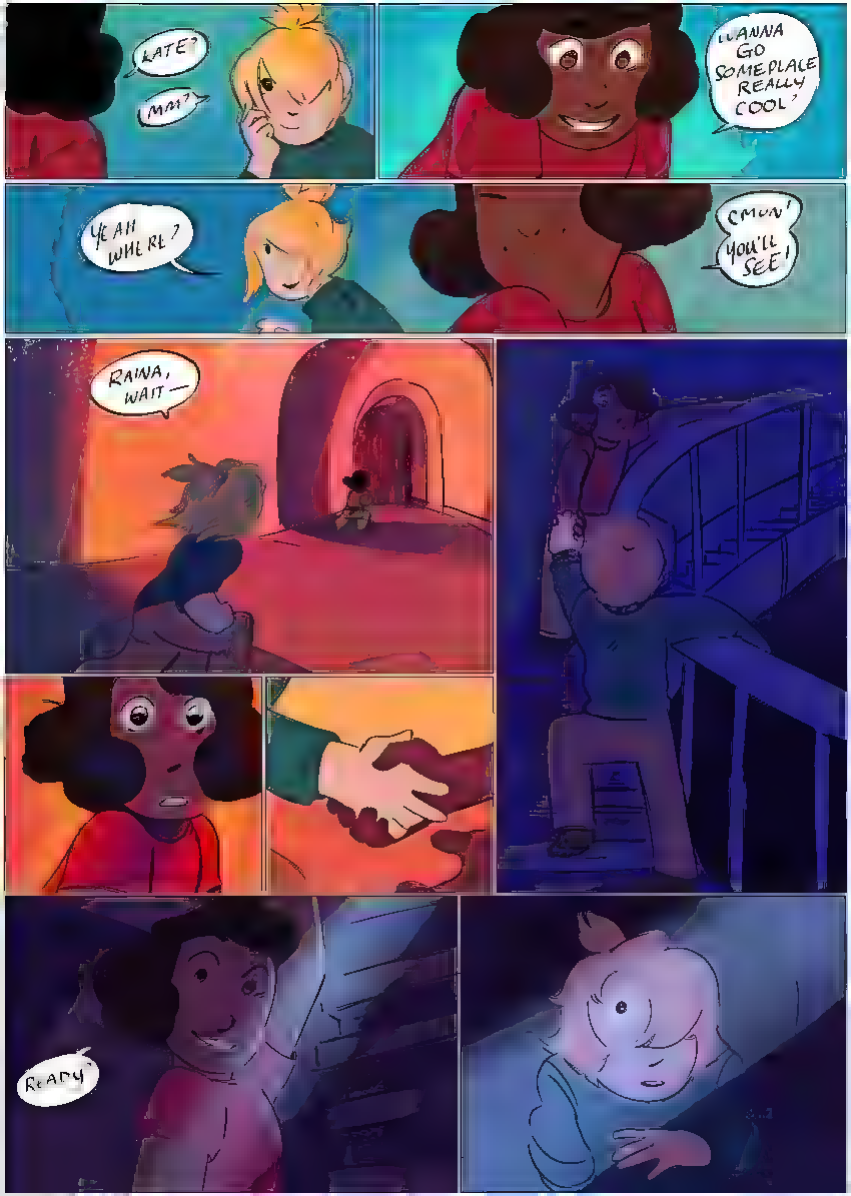

SO, IN THE MORNING...

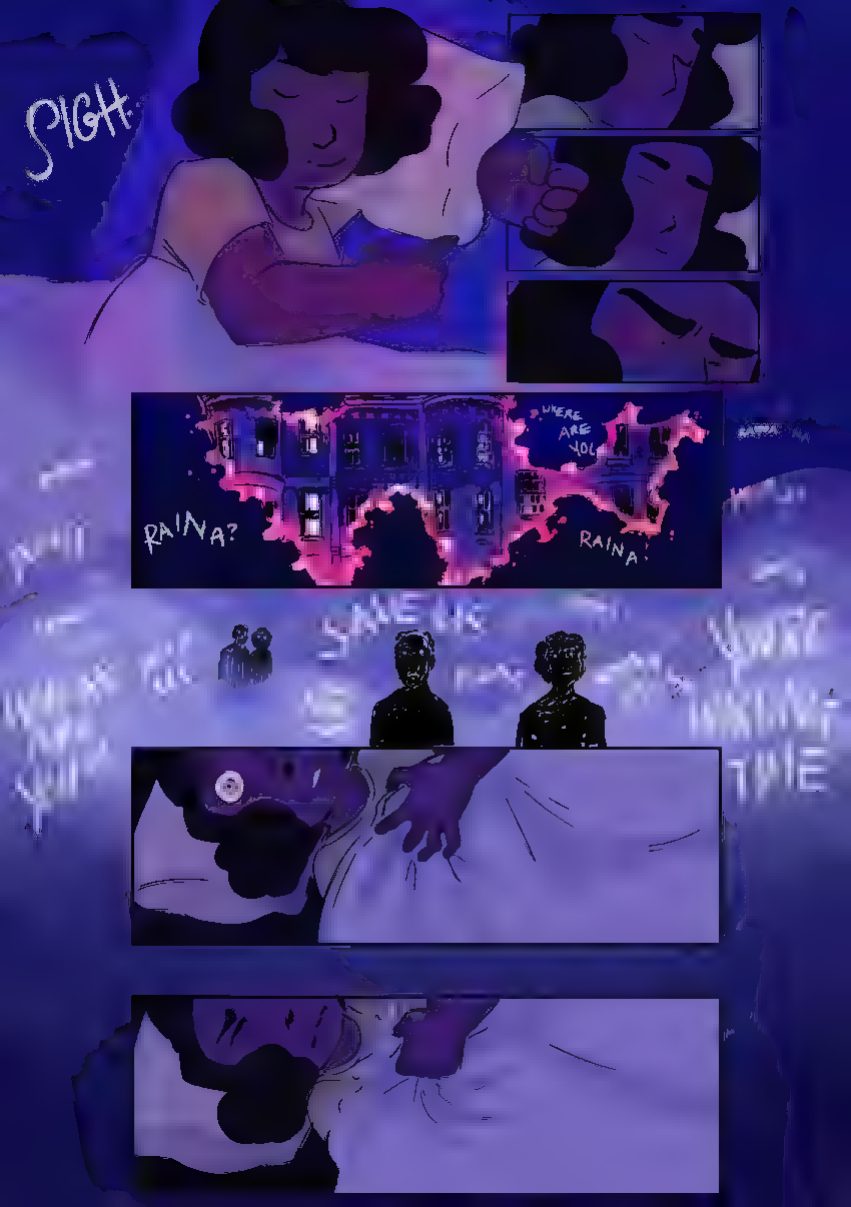
NOD

HEY!!
YOU'RE HUMAN!!
OOF
YOU SAY THAT LIKE IT'S A REALLY BIG DEAL
IT IS! WAIT- ARE YOU HERE ALONE?
UH-YEAH
-BLESS I-
-WHOOPH-
THEN YOU SHOULD STAY WITH US!
WE-LL, I- UH-
ACH- -BUT ALONE- KATIE-
SORRY... WE HAVEN'T SEEN ANY OTHER HUMANS. WE WERE STARTING TO THINK WE WERE THE ONLY ONES HERE.
WE WERE ABOUT TO HAVE LUNCH-YOU'RE WELCOME TO JOIN US BACKSTAGE

YOU'RE SURE YOU CAN COOK WITH THAT FIRE?
YOU HAVE NO FAITH IN ME!!
THIS MORNING SHE BURNED ALL HER HAIR OFF
IT WAS ON PURPOSE!
WE STARTED A NEW LIFE IN A MONSTER CITY AND I DECIDED TO CUT MY HAIR!!
I THINK FIRE DECIDED
UGH!!
THIS IS ALL REALLY NICE
YEAH!
IT'S LIKE YOU WANT TO BE HERE
WELL
WHY NOT I GUESS!
FEEL LIKE IM ON AN ALIEN PLANET
THIS PLACE IS SO STRANGE, THE MONSTERS ARE FRIENDLY
IT WOULD BE AN ADVENTURE IF I HAD A HOME TO GO BACK TO
AH-SO-!
WHO WANTS TO HELP ME COOK THIS DEMON LUNCH?

HEY
OH, RAINA!
COME LOOK AT THIS!!
YOU KNOW THE THING I GOT FROM THAT, LIKE, GHOUL WHO SELLS THOSE WIND-UP TOYS?
I FINALLY PUT IT TOGETHER!
SO WHEN IT'S WOUND UP, IT TURNS THE MAGIC IN THE GEARS ON TOO.
OH!!!
THIS IS AMAZING!
OH, I-
THANKS


KATE?
MAT?
WANNA GO SOMEPLACE REALLY COOL?
YEAH WHERE?
CMON! YOU'LL SEE!
RAINA, WAIT—
READY?


SIGH.
WHERE ARE YOU
RAINA?
RAINA!

NANA
WHAT
LATE FOLD ME YOU WERE PREGNANT
GOOD
GOOD YOU KNOW
PLEASE DON'T DO THIS
YOUR PARENTS WOULD WANT YOU TO STAY SAFE
THEY WOULD WANT YOU TO BE HAPPY
THAT'S NOT WHAT I WANT
CANT JUST LET GO OF THEM I CANT BE HAPPY LIKE THAT
YOU LEFT YOUR MOM IN THE HUMAN WORLD BUT YOU DONT TRY TO GO BACK TO HER
I GUESS YOU DONT UNDERSTAND

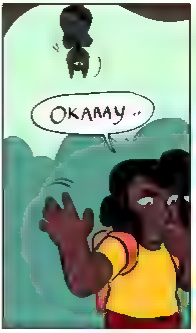
WE HAVE TOLD YOU I THINK THAT KATE WAS VERY ILL FOR A TIME?
SHE WAS ALWAYS SICKLY FOR A WHILE WE- MY MOTHER AND I- THOUGHT SHE WOULD NOT SURVIVE
OUR MOTHER WOULD HAVE ENDURED ANYTHING TO SAVE HER
ANY WORK ANY HEARTBREAK
WHEN WE CROSSED TO THIS WORLD SOMETHING CHANGED IN KATE
SHE IS HEALTHY HERE AS SHE NEVER WAS AT HOME
SO THE DECISION WAS MINE STAY WHERE SHE CAN LIVE, OR CHASE A WORLD WHERE SHE MAY NOT
I KNOW WHICH MY MOTHER WOULD WANT ME TO CHOOSE

IM SOR
DONT
YOU SHOULD DO WHAT YOU THINK IS RIGHT
CELINE
WHEN I FIND MY PARENTS AND GO HOME I'LL FIND A WAY TO TELL YOUR MOM YOU'RE BOTH OKAY
I WON'T LET YOUR DECISION GO TO WASTE. I WON'T STOP UNTIL I FIND HER
I HOPE SO
IF ANYONE CAN DO IT, IT'S YOU
JUST PLEASE
DONT MAKE THIS A LONG GOODBYE FOR KATE

Kate-
I am s[redacted]
glad I met you
[redacted]
I will come back
soon I promise
SIGH

HEY- HAVE YOU SEEN A LITTLE TINY WITCH NAMED ESSIE LATELY?

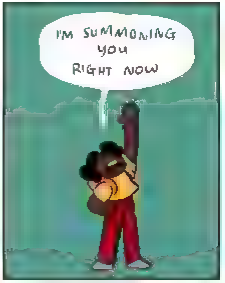
SHRUG


OKAAAY ..

WHY DID I THINK SHE'D JUST BE THERE WHERE I LEFT HER

I WONDER IF I CAN.
...

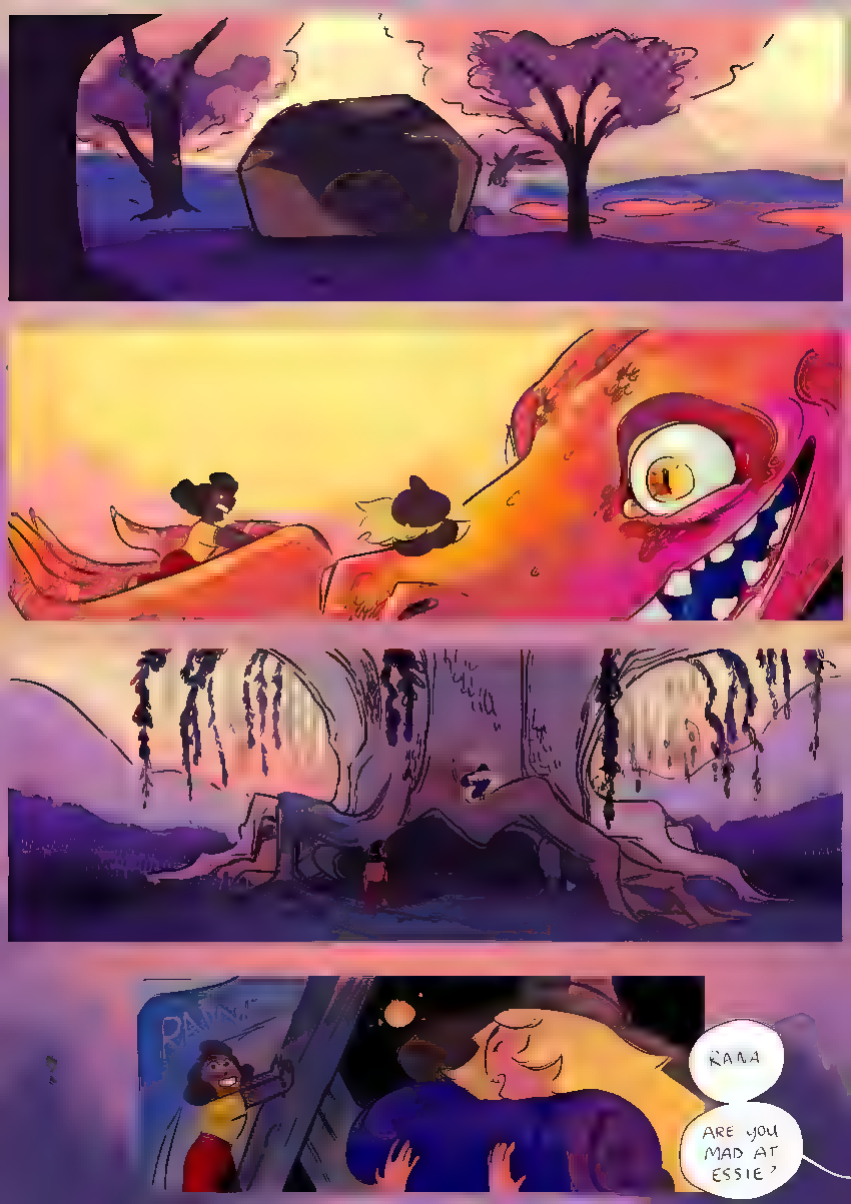
ESSIE


I'M SUMMONING YOU RIGHT NOW

I DON'T THINK THIS THROUGH
CRASH
CREEAK
CREEAK
CREEAK
SNAP

KAINA!
LOOKING FOR ME?
HOW LUCKY THAT I WAS NEARBY TO HEAR YOU!
...YEAH!

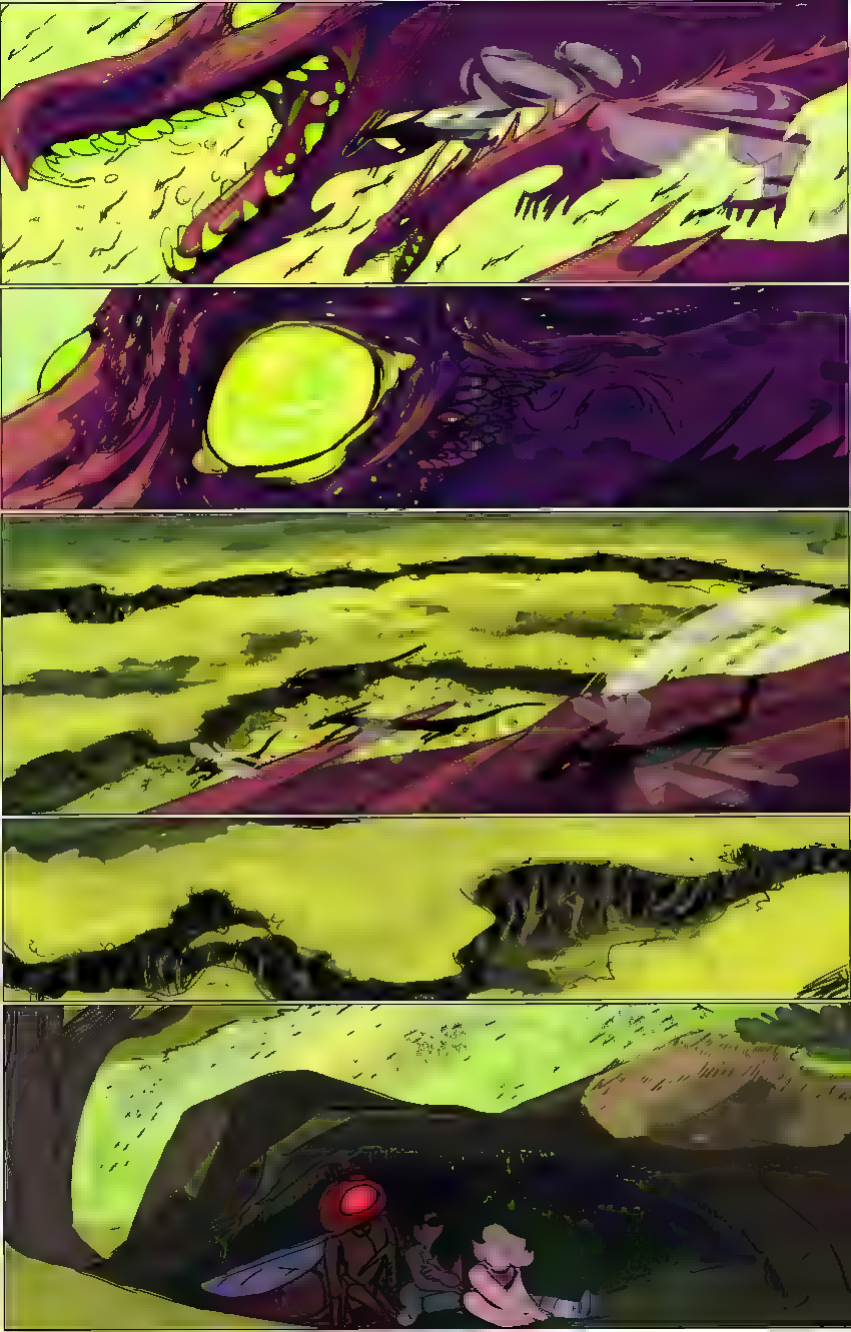
SO- WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?
JUST RUNNING A FEW ERRANDS HOW ARE THINGS WITH YOU?
M STILL LOOKING
NOD
RAINA—
ABOUT THAT I'D LIKE YOU TO TRAVEL WITH ME THINK WE HAVE A LOT TO OFFER EACH OTHER- I'LL USE WHAT RESOURCES I HAVE ON YOUR QUEST
YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN HELP?
CAN TRY
WANT TO TRY
OK ESSIE


RAMA
RAMA
ARE YOU MAD AT ESSIE?

Don't know
Scoot
I DONT MEAN THAT YOU LIKE HAVE TO KNOW
JUST
IF YOU'RE MAD, THEN I'M MAD TOO

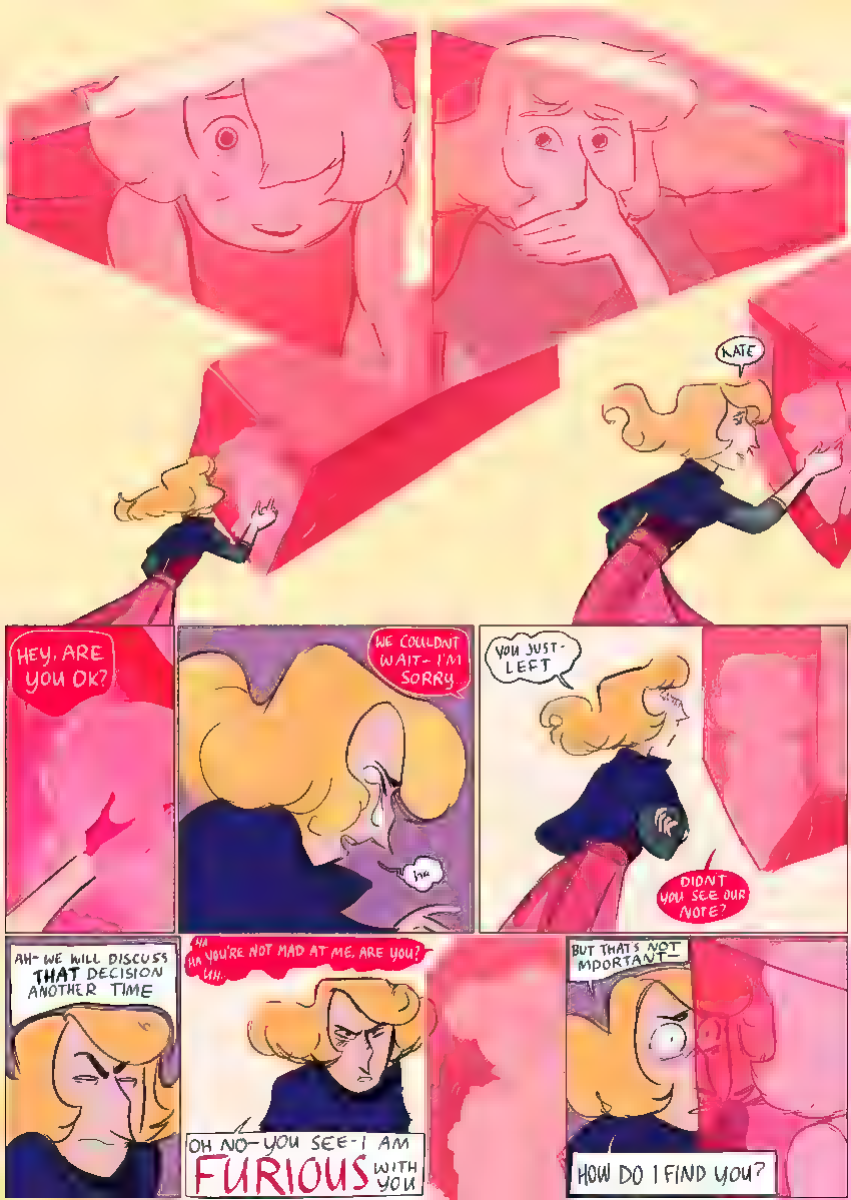
WHOOOOSH
HEY- DO YOU HEAR

MMOOOOHM
SSSS



D'YOU THINK THEY KNOW WE'RE HERE?
I DONT THINK IT MATTERS AS LONG AS WE DONT GET IN THE WAY
THEY'RE NOT AFTER US
BUT I DONT THINK THEY'D BE HERE IF THEY'D FOUND WHAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR
SO TRY NOT TO
[illegible]

NORN?!
MOTHER! THAT WAS TOO RECKLESS — WE DONT KNOW NORN'S LIMITS YET! IF I HADN'T BEEN HERE-
IT IS URGENT!
KATE


KATE
HEY, ARE YOU OK?
WE COULDN'T WAIT- I'M SORRY
YOU JUST- LEFT
DIDN'T YOU SEE OUR NOTE?
AH- WE WILL DISCUSS THAT DECISION ANOTHER TIME
HA HA YOU'RE NOT MAD AT ME, ARE YOU? UH..
OH NO- YOU SEE- I AM FURIOUS WITH YOU
BUT THAT'S NOT MPORTANT-
HOW DO I FIND YOU?

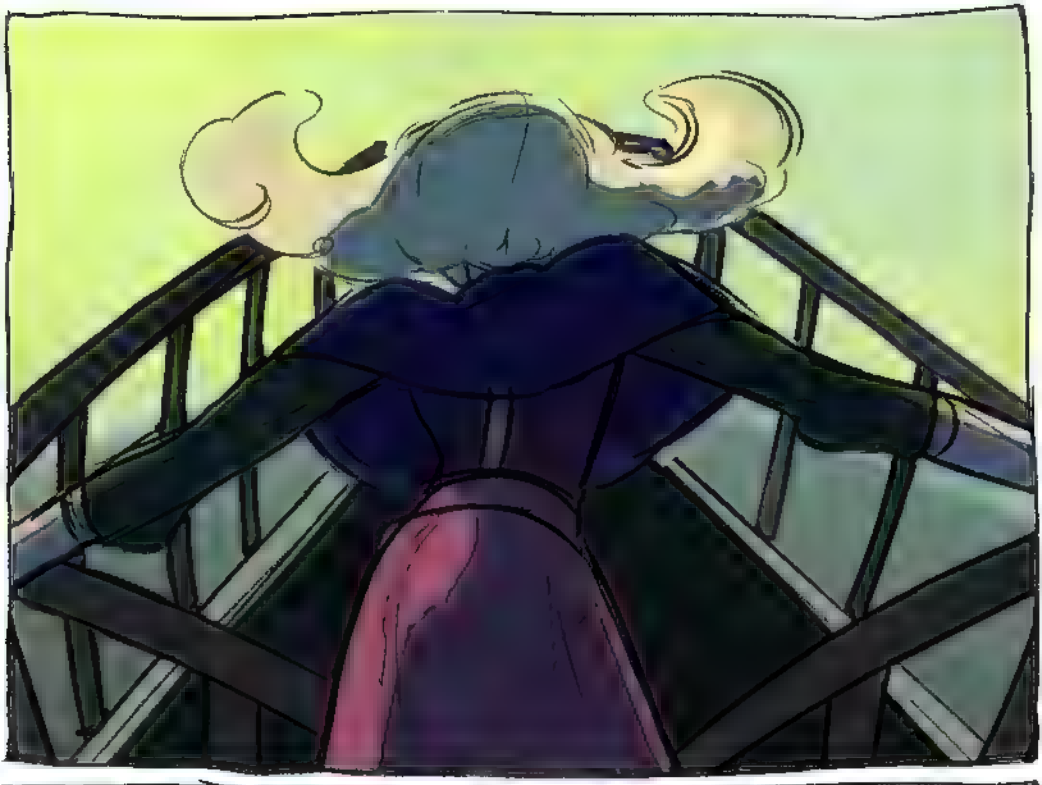
BACK AN, SO
AIRBORNE?!
MORE CREATURES ARE COMING FAST!
HOW DO YOU PLAN TO FIND RAINA' WHERE IS SHE?
BANG

BANG
BANG

THE BARRIER IS BROKEN!
RUN, SISTERS!
HOW-
THEY'RE COMING!
WHERE ARE THE GUARDS?!
ABANDON THE ANTECHAMBER!
BAR THE DOOR!
HURRY-
THERE'S TOO MANY. GO BA
SHRIEK

MOTHER
DID YOU-
THE NURSERY. ABANDON THE ARCHIVE. I WON'T
DAUGHTER
BUT- THE BOOKS-
THE SWARM WILL FOLLOW.
GET THEM AWAY FROM US.

YOU THINK ESSIE DID THIS?!
QUIET.
I NEED TO FOCUS
THE HOLE YOU BURNED THROUGH OUR DEFENCES HAS CAUSED ENOUGH DAMAGE ALREADY
DO NOT DISTRACT ME
IT IS ONLY
THAT I DONT HAVE YOU THROWN OUT, TOO.
OH NO
WE'RE TOO LATE

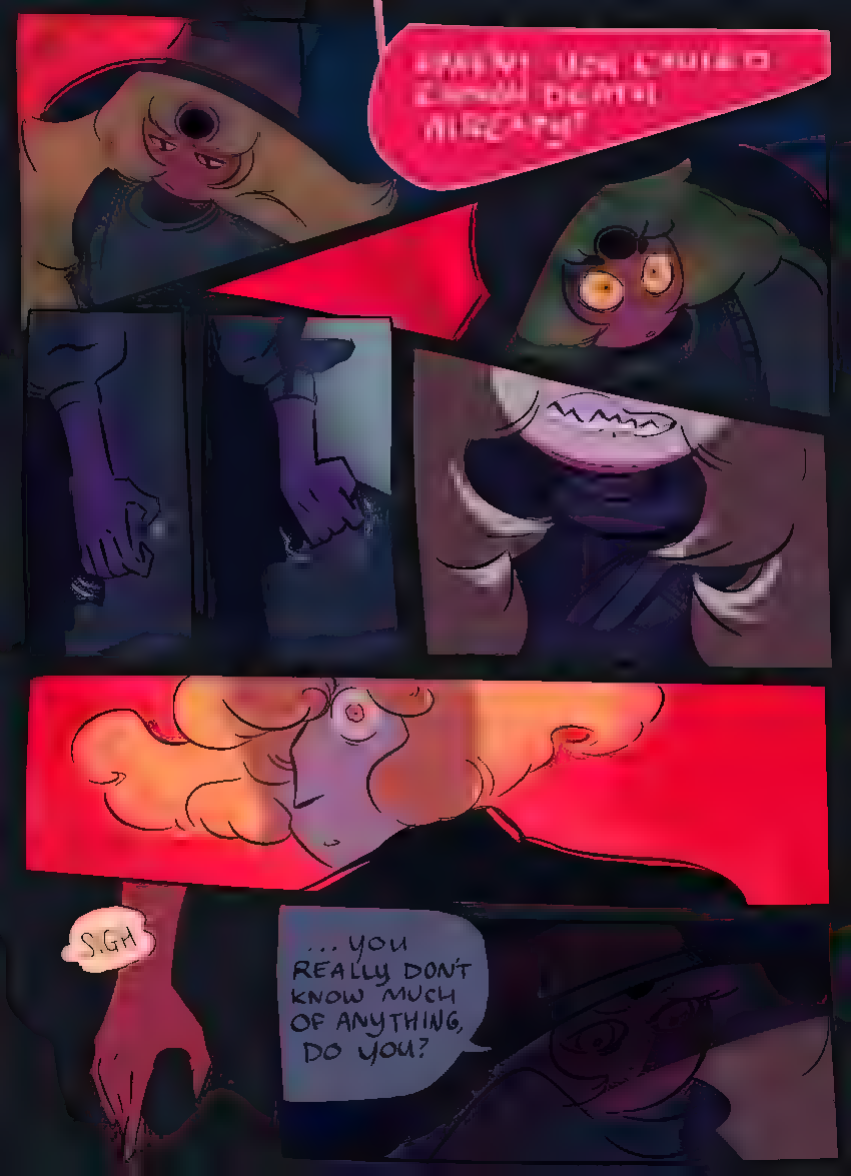


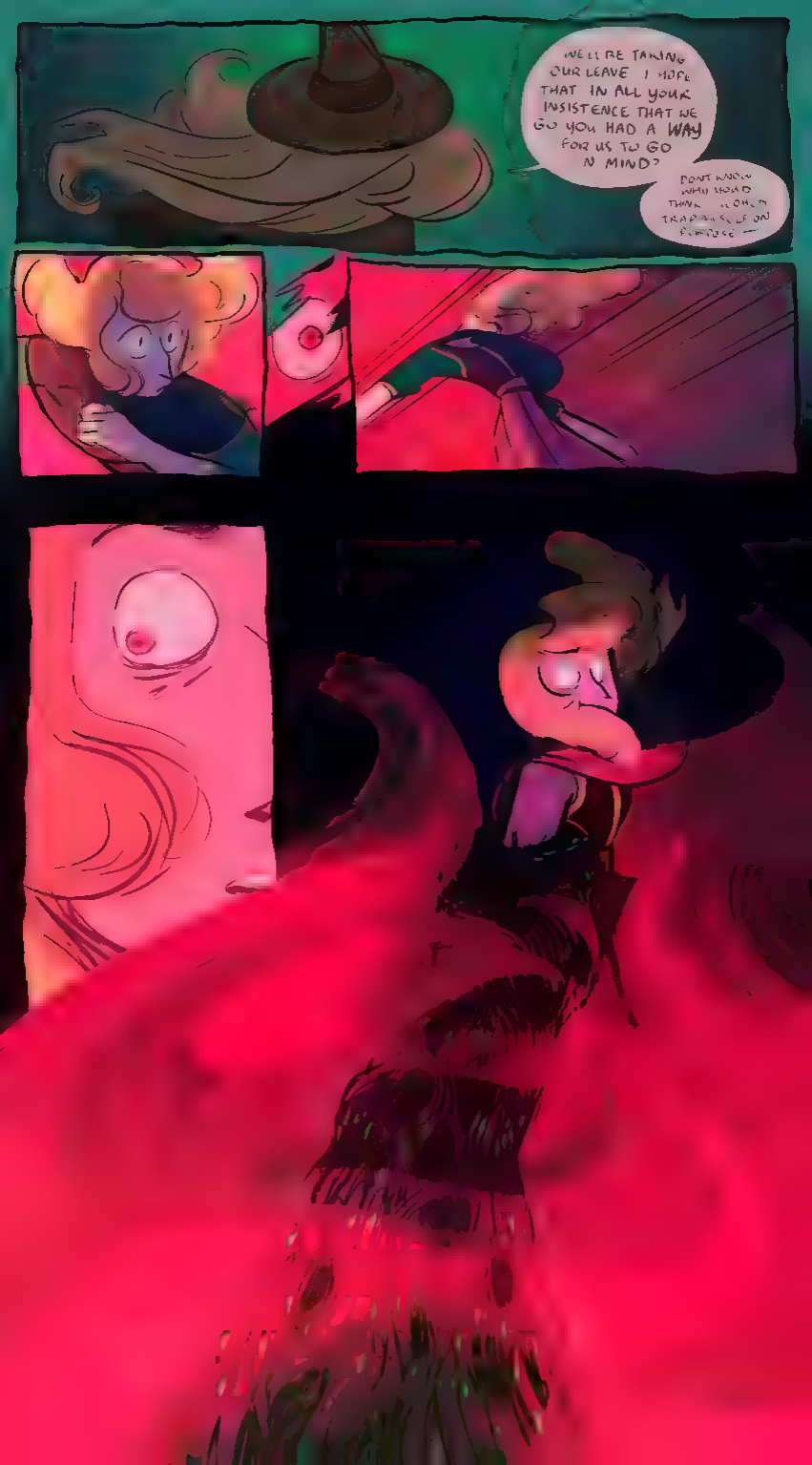
FIRE
I SEE FLAMES. PANICKING. CLICHÉ. FRIGHT. MOM THINKS.

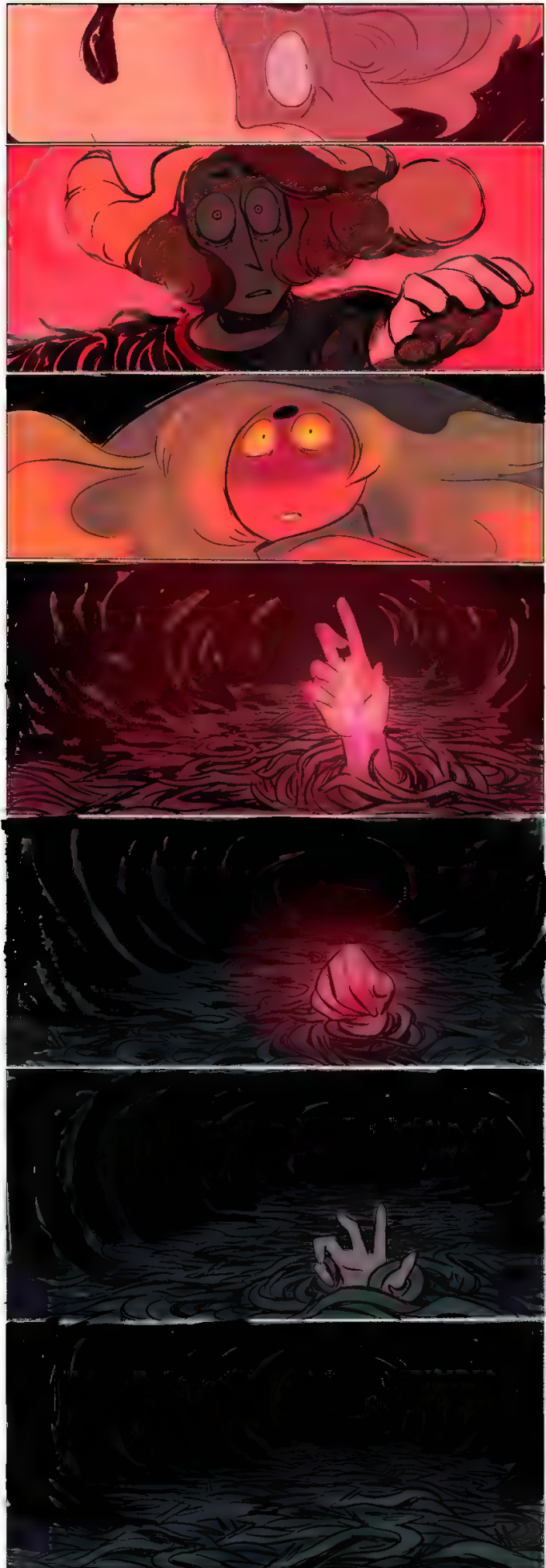
PAT PAT
SEEMS I UNDERESTIMATED THEM. THEY DEFINITELY-
-KNOW IT'S ME..
...
SO, CELINE- DID YOU LEARN EVERYTHING WE NEEDED?
ST ABOUT
WELL BEFORE WE LEAVE, PERHAPS THE ANTS NEED OUR HELP?

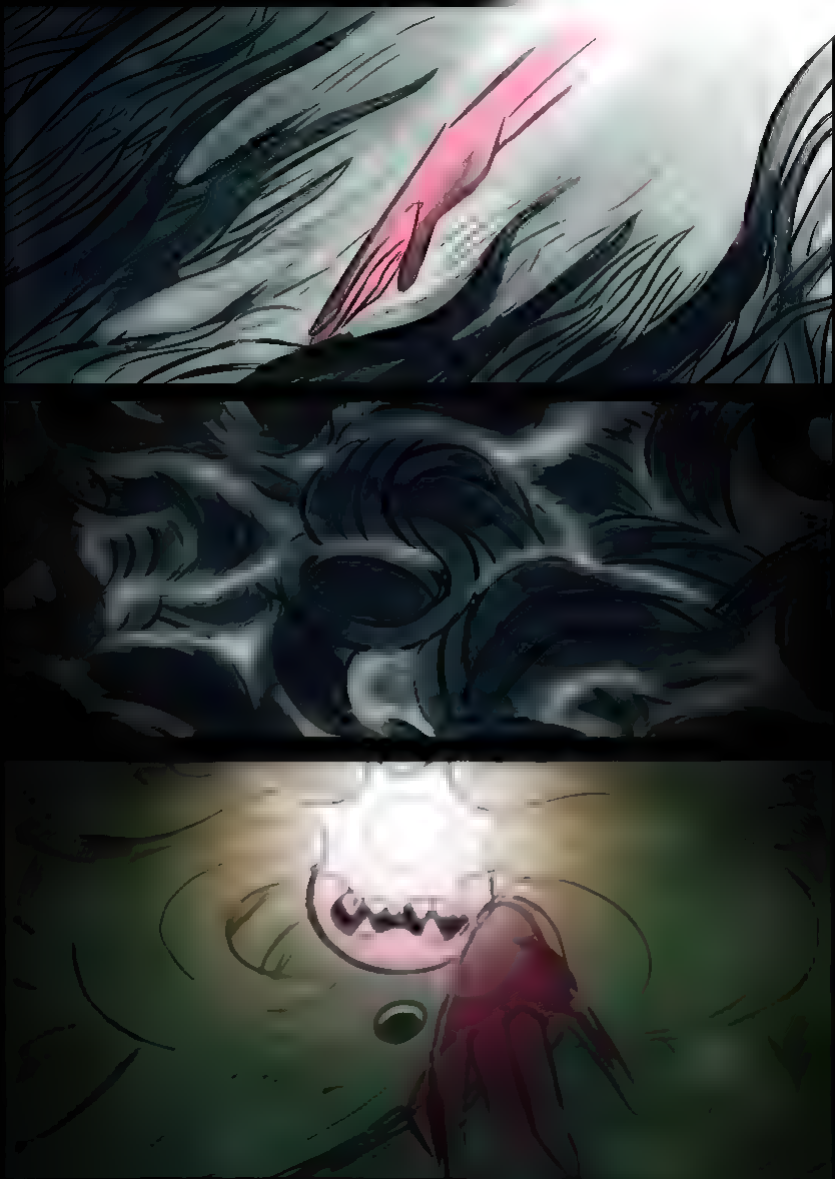
IF I MAY.
ARCHIVIST
USING ONE ANOTHER'S TITLES, ARE WE? AND WHAT SHOULD I CALL YOU IN FRONT OF THE CHILD?!
HOPEFULLY SOMETHING NICE.

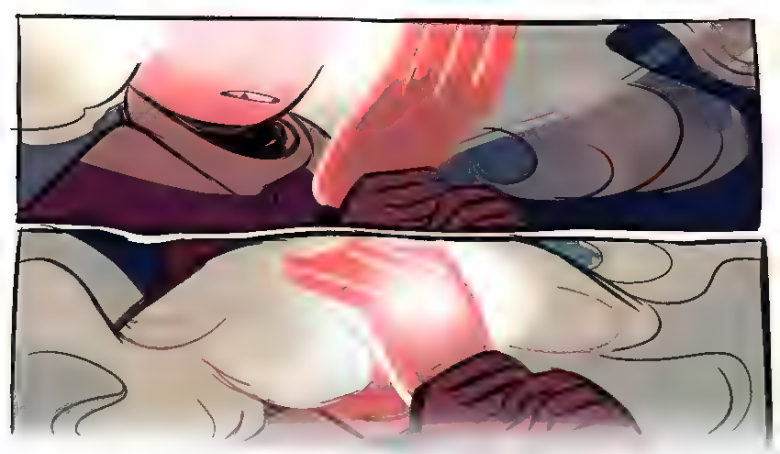
OF THIS. I DONT KNOW WHY YOU ARE THIS WAY.
FAMILY?
I'M HAVING TROUBLE KNOWING WHOS IN YOUR FAMILY AND WHO ISNT LATELY
YOU SEEM TO LIKE PLAYING IN MY ARENA SO MUCH, I LOSE TRACK.
I DONT SHARE YOUR MOTIVES
FUNNY, I CANT RECALL TELLING YOU MY MOTIVES

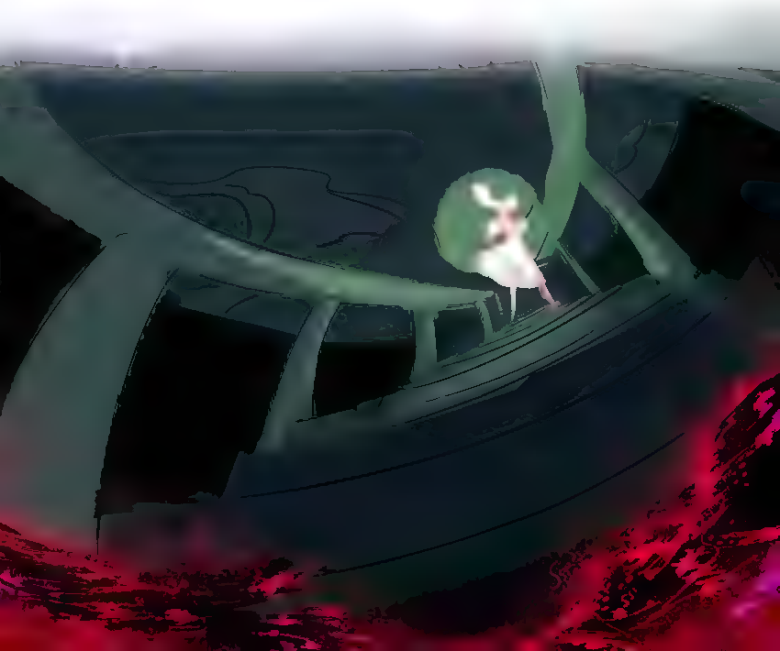

...YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW MUCH OF ANYTHING, DO YOU?
SIGH


WE'LL BE TAKING OUR LEAVE I HOPE THAT IN ALL YOUR INSISTENCE THAT WE GO YOU HAD A WAY FOR US TO GO N MIND?
DON'T KNOW WHO WOULD THINK TO OPEN TRAP DOOR ON PURPOSE


→ Click



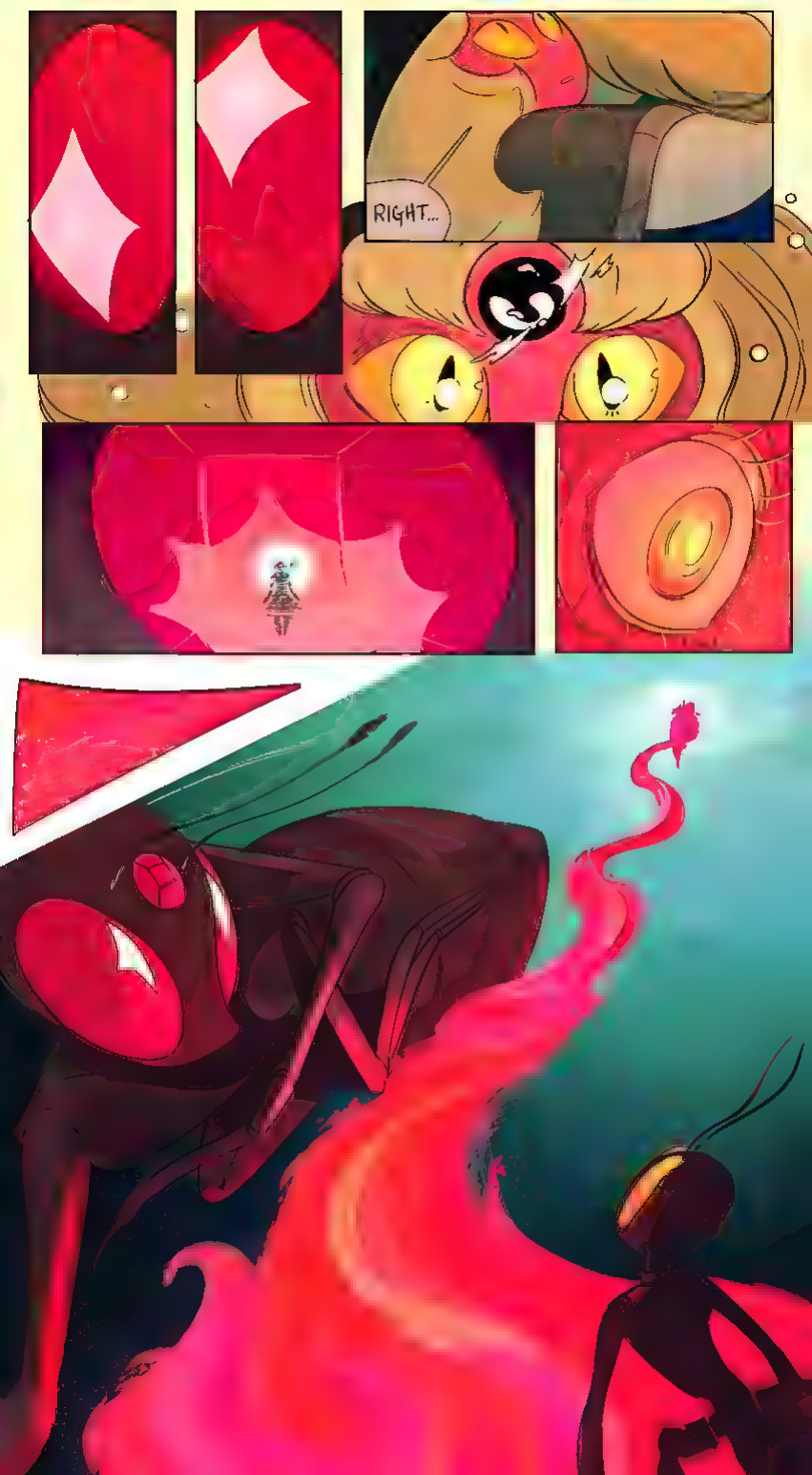




ENOUGH.
LOOKING FOR M
WELL, YOU'VE FOUND ME, HAVEN'T YOU?
CAN YOU SEE ME THROUGH THESE EYES? CAN YOU HEAR ME?
HA HA HE
YOU WILL NOT TAKE A CHILD FROM ME AGAIN.

HOW MUCH DEEPER DO I NEED TO BURY YOU?
ESSIE-STOP.
MORE ARE COMING.

I'LL DRAW THEM AWAY FROM YOU
SCRAMBLE /!\
PLEASE DO WHAT YOU CAN FOR MY FAMILY
DONT BLAME NORN AND KATE FOR WHAT I'VE DONE.
I DON'T
CAN YOU DO IT AGAIN?
"IT"?
I THINK I CAN GET OUT
BUT I NEED THE UH- THE FIREPOWER


RIGHT...

KRAAA

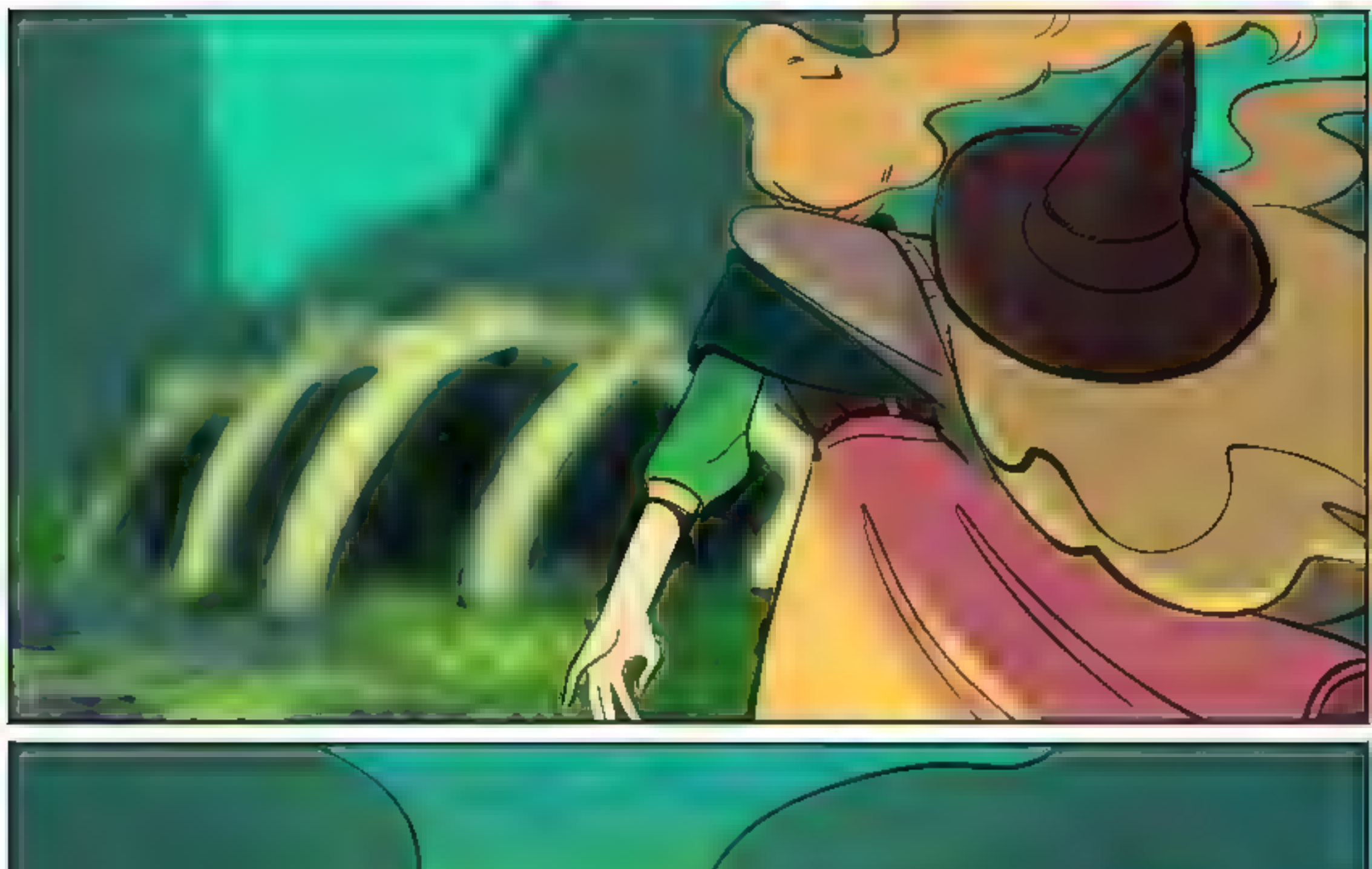
SHAK

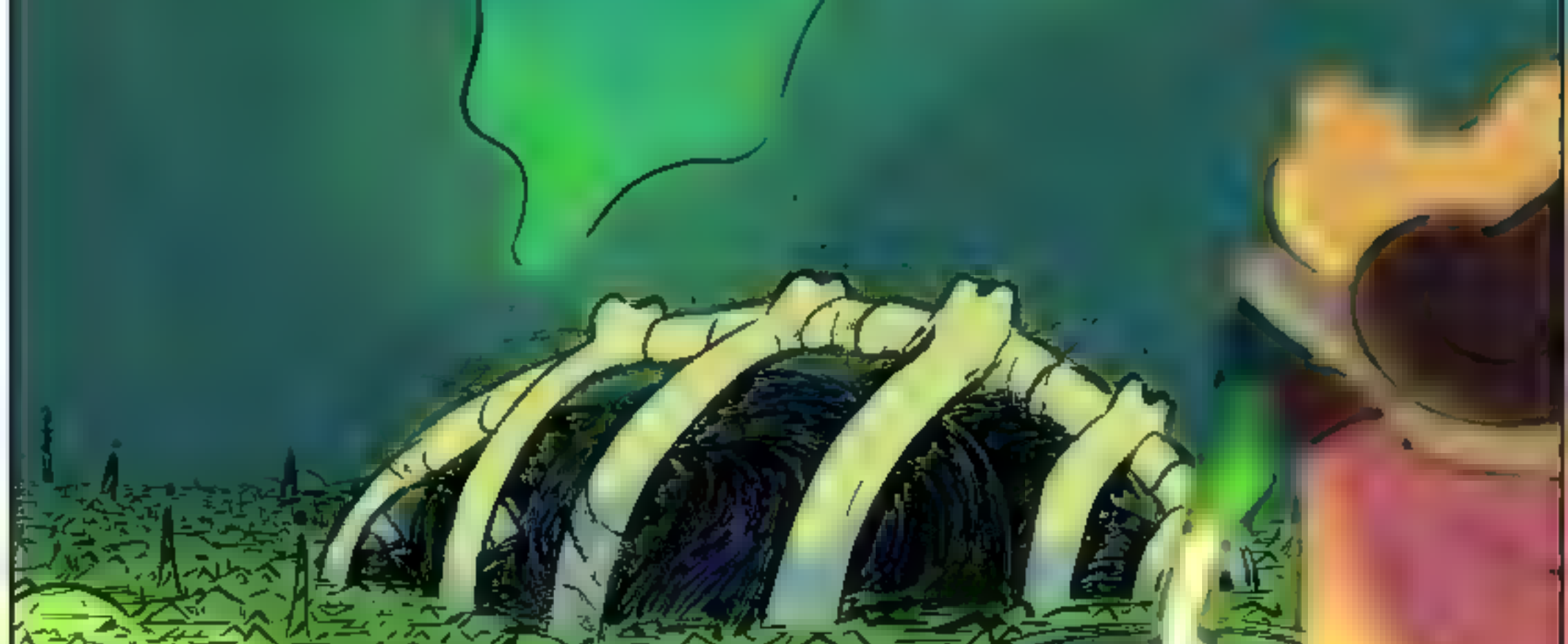
WELL.

I GUESS OUR LITTLE PLAN WORKED

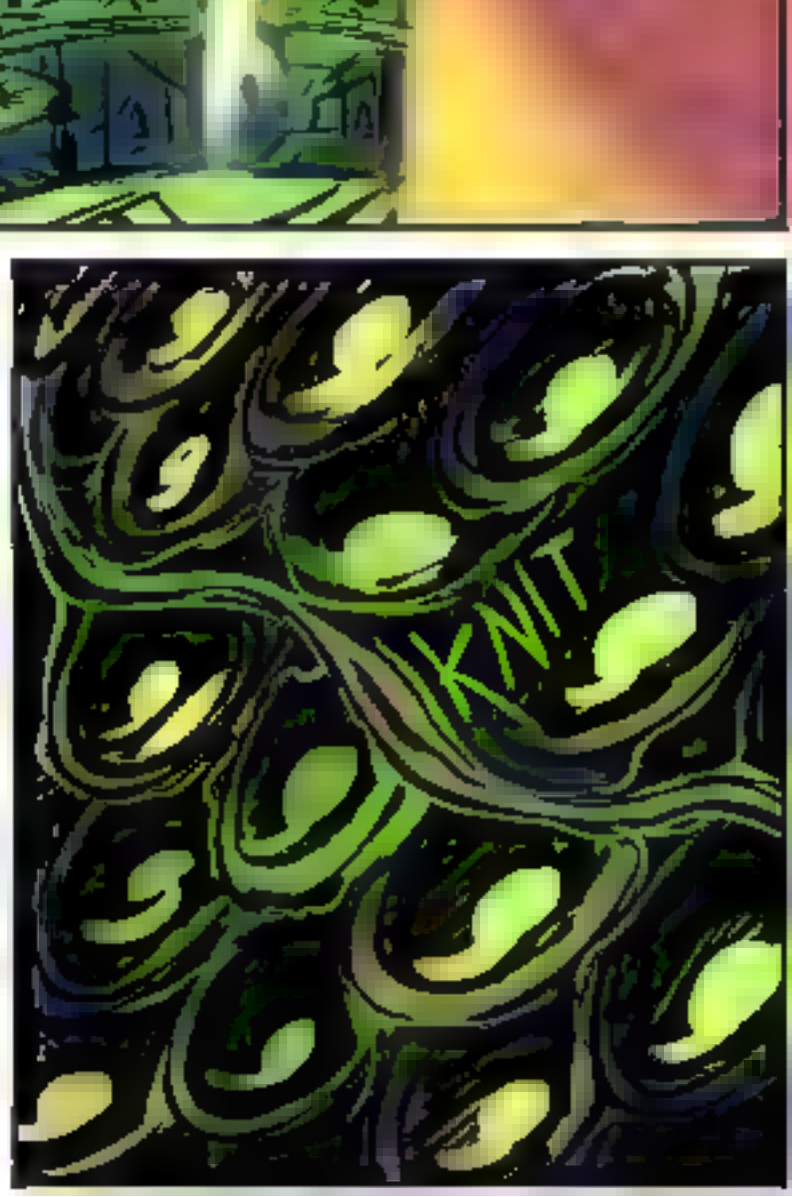
OUR PLAN TO GET THEM TO CHASE US

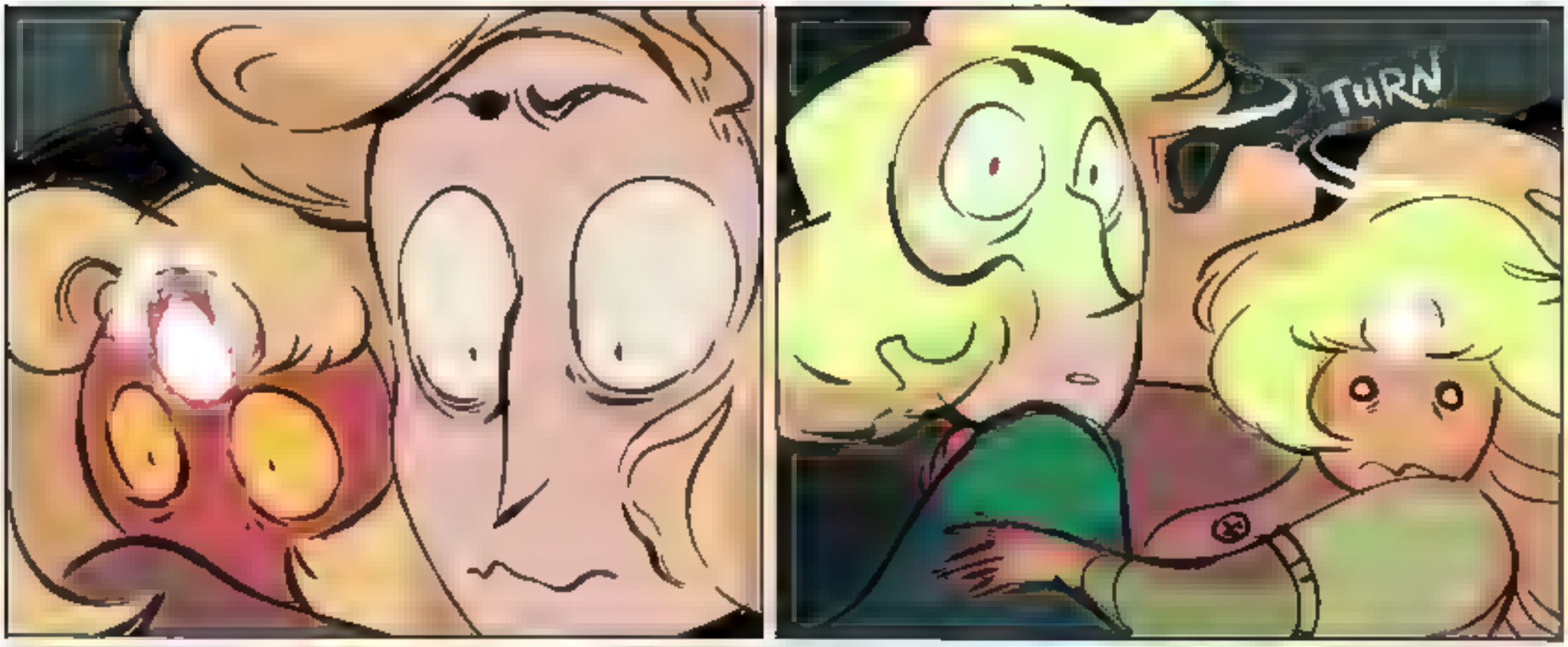
BUT IF WE CAN JUST- IF WE JUST GET-

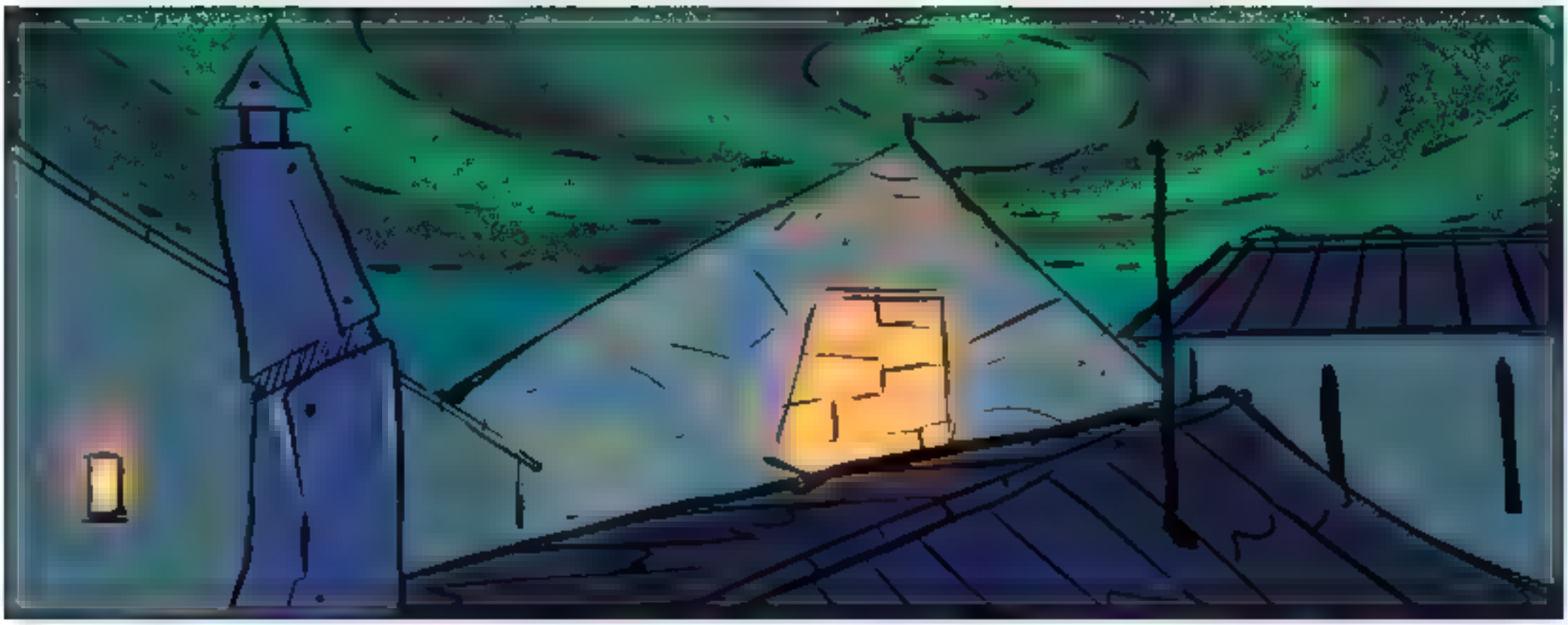


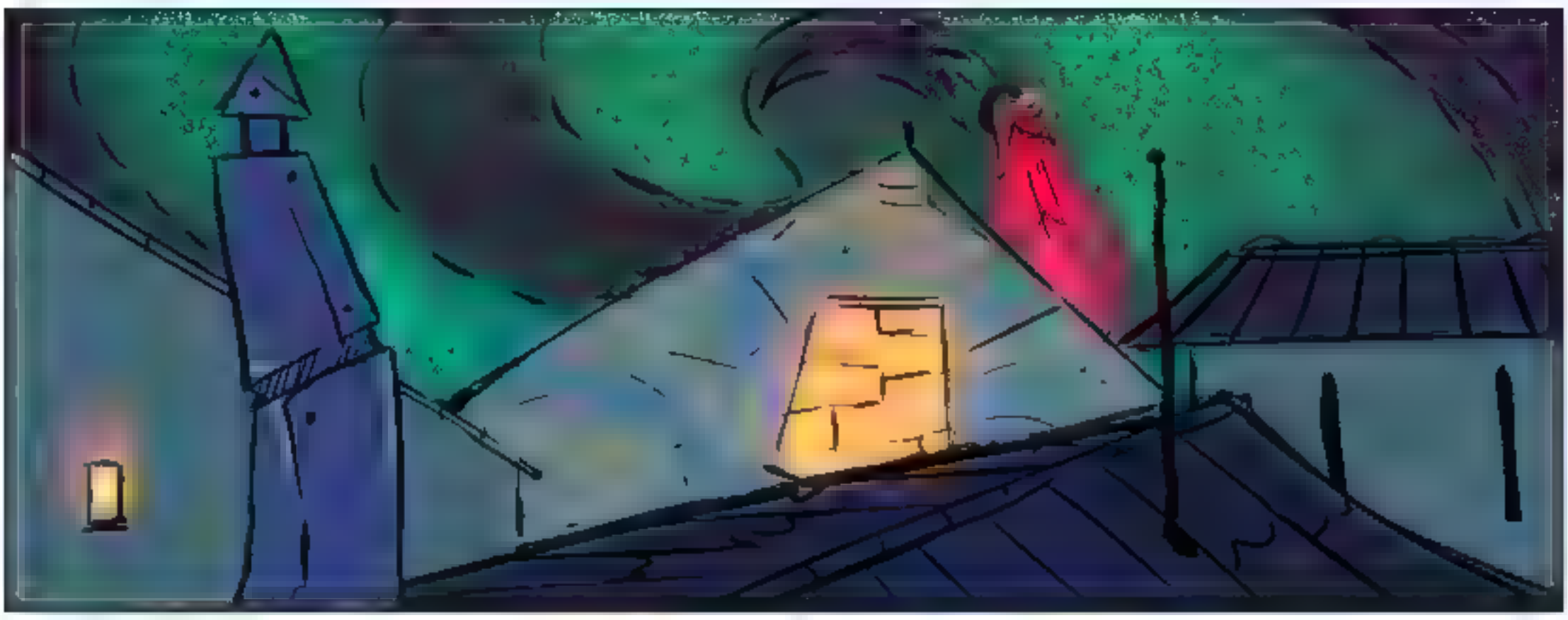


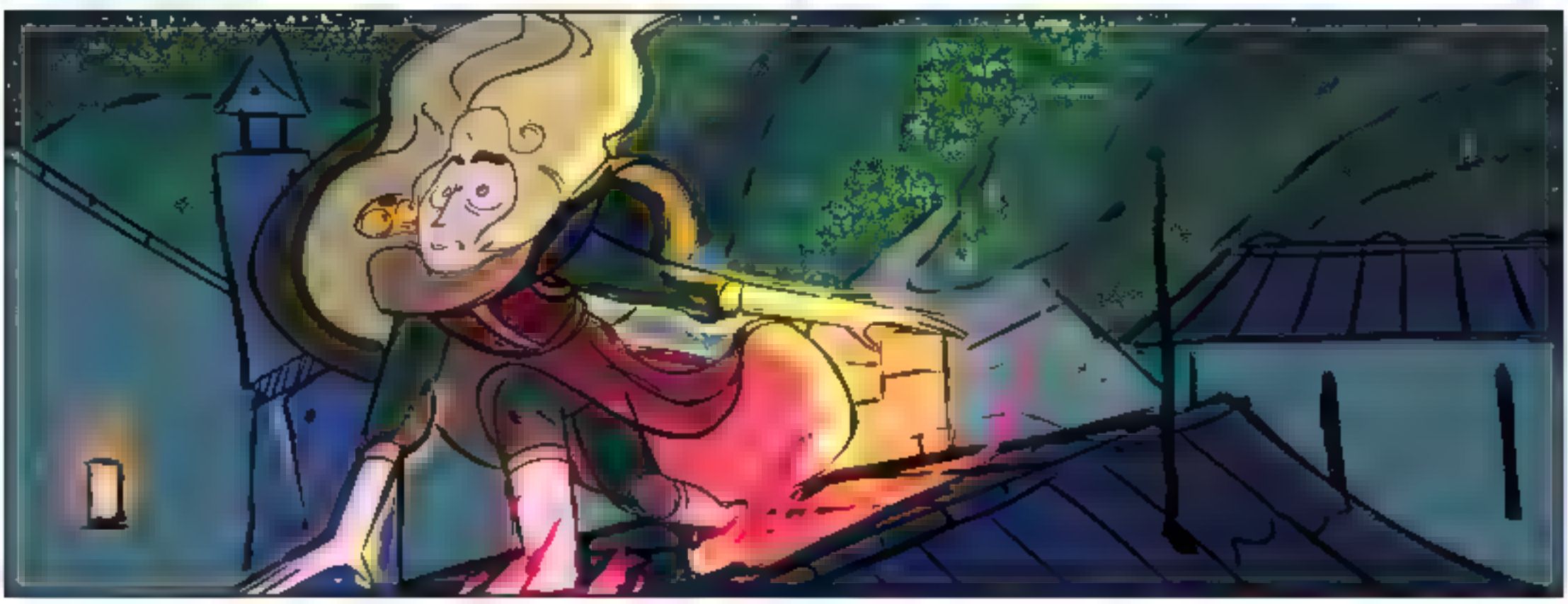
SHQUTCH
SSSK
SHLP

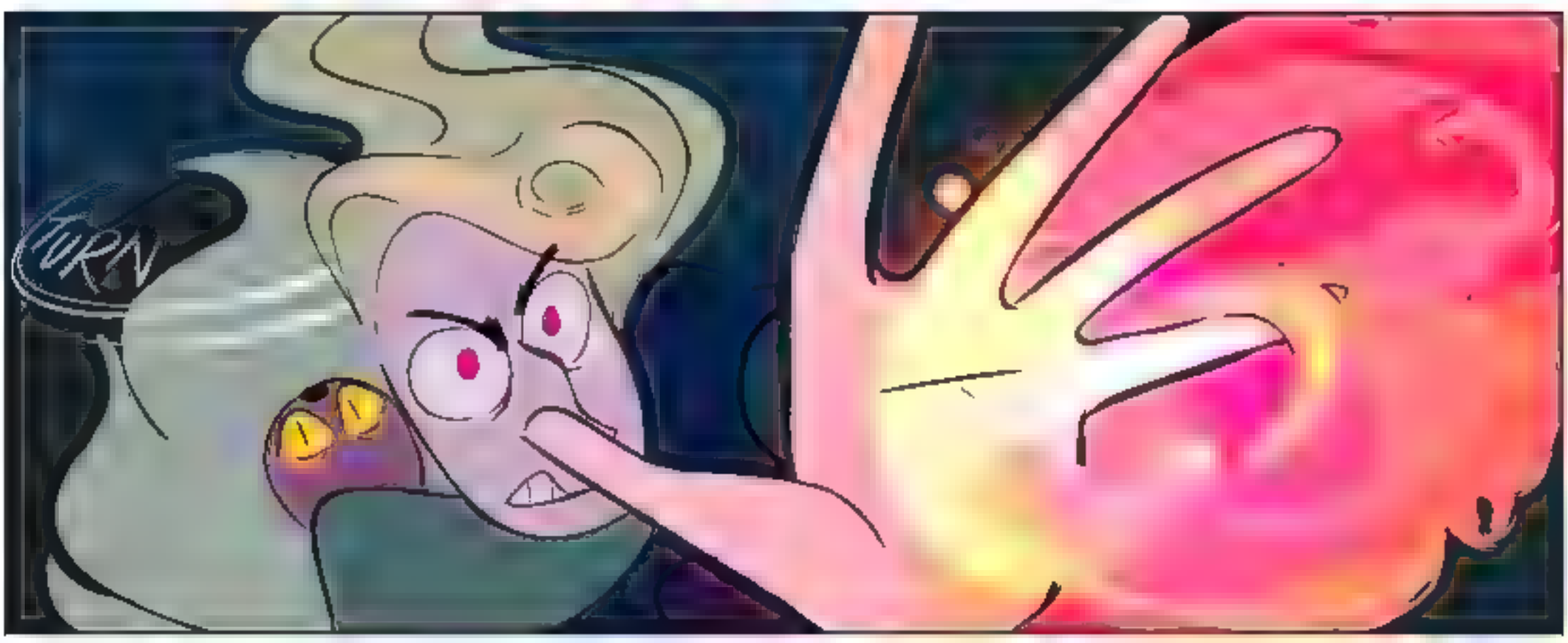

KNIT

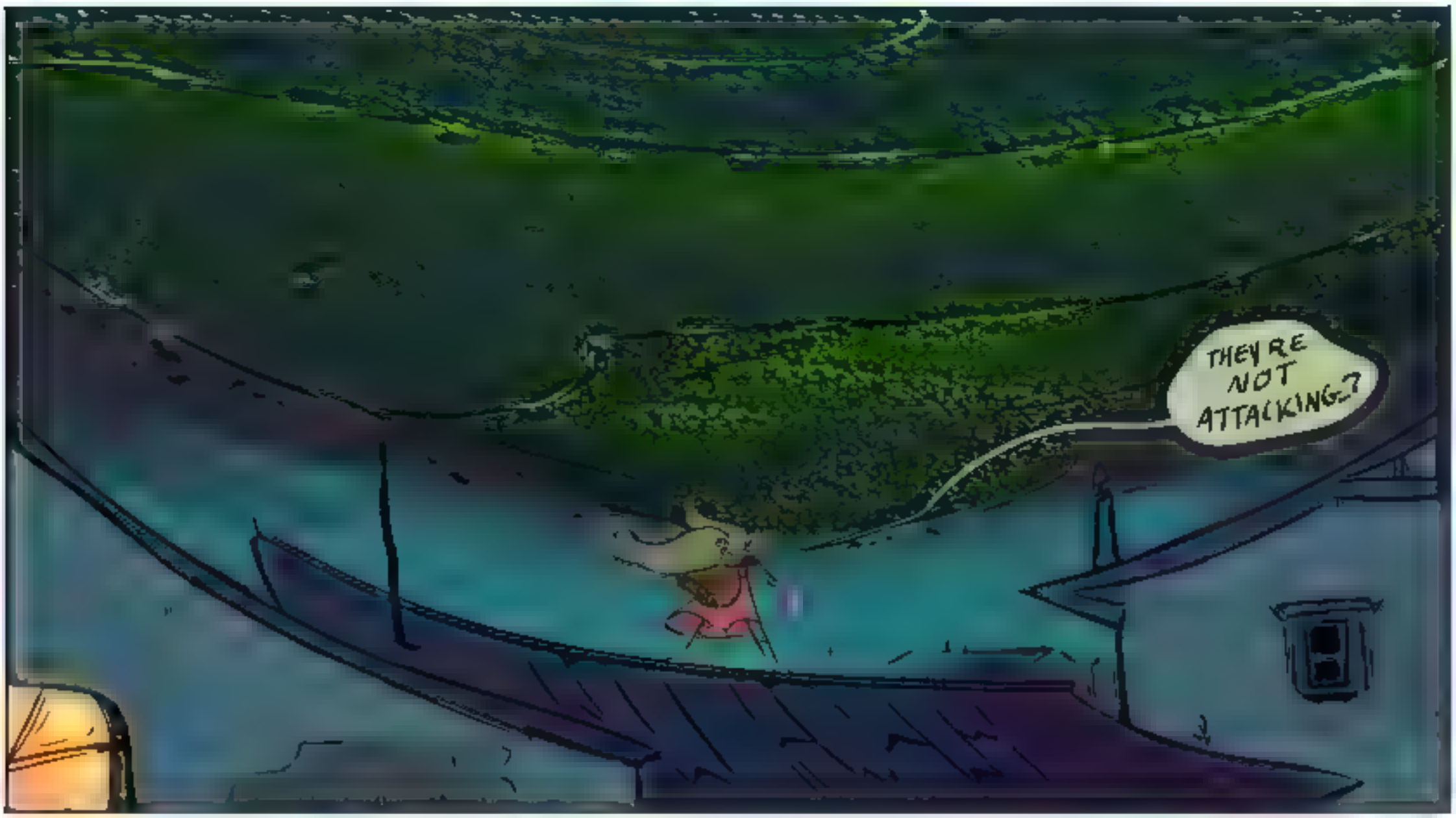

TURN

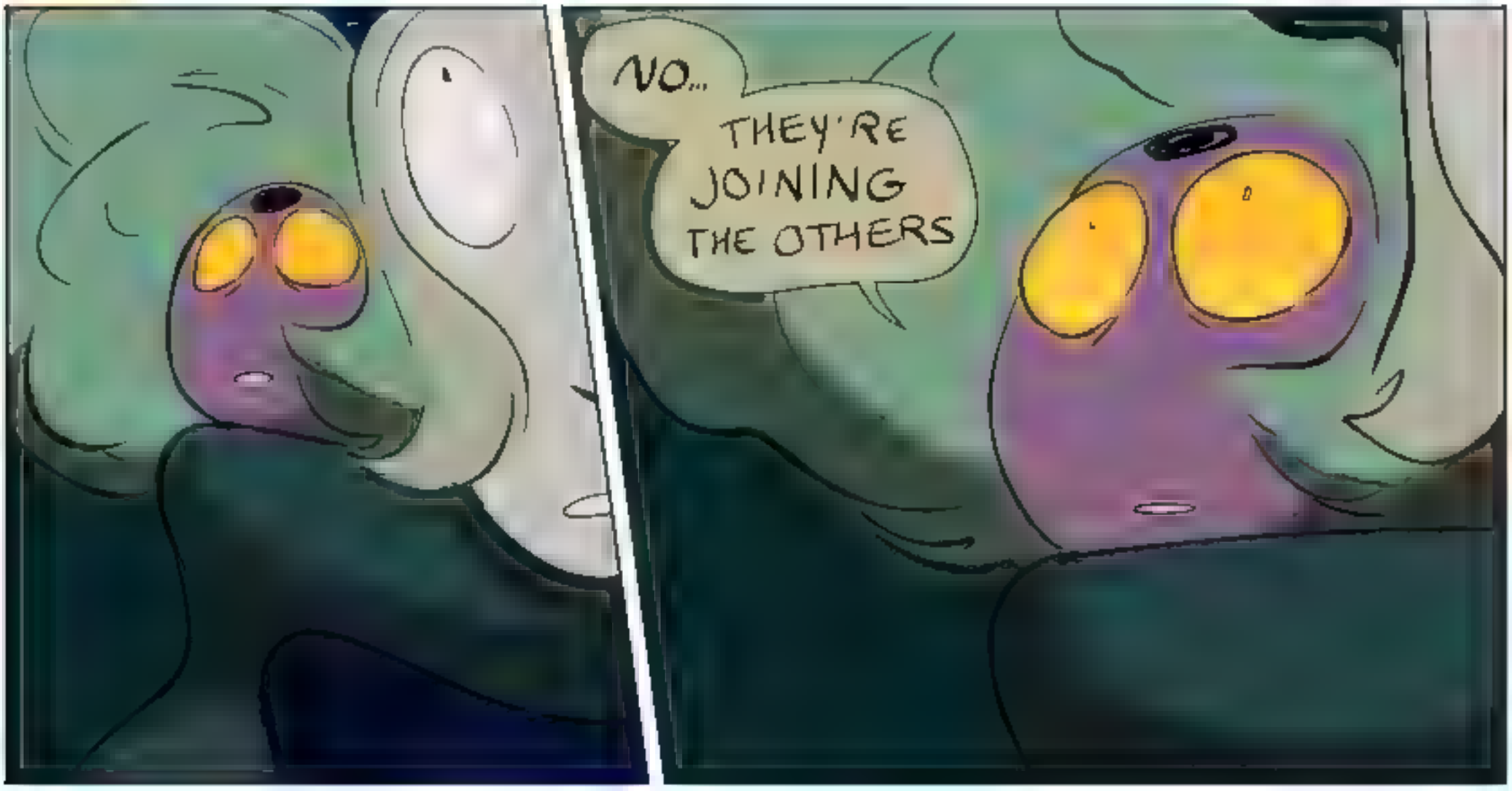







TURN


THEY RE NOT ATTACKING?

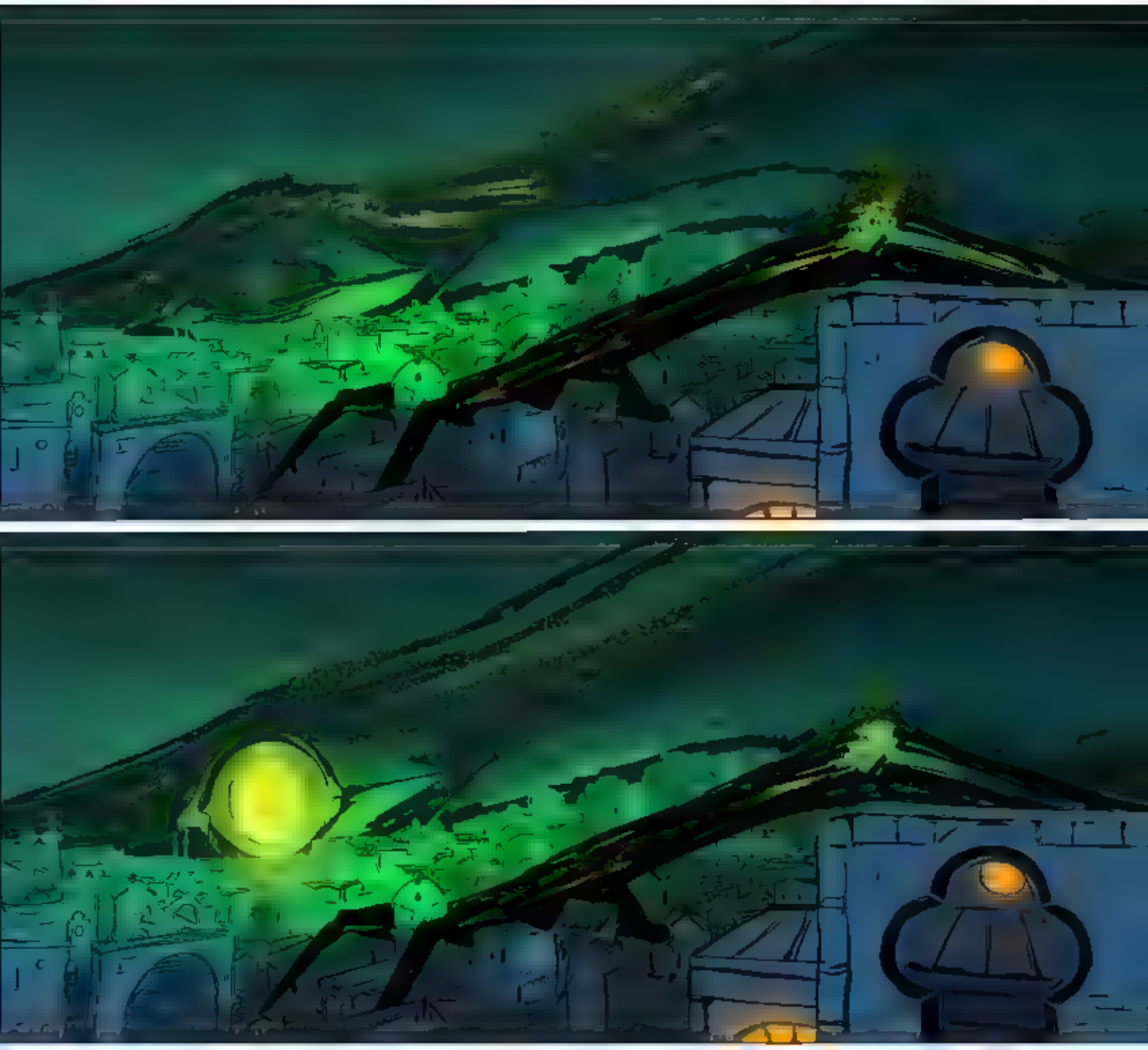

NO...
THEY'RE JOINING THE OTHERS

THE IDIOT

HE'S GOING TO OPEN ANOTHER CHASM

CELINE, YOUR SISTER IS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT *THING*

CAN YOU GET TO HER?



IT'S TOO BIG...
IT WON'T BE ABLE TO
GET UP. IT **CAN'T.**

KRAKKSSSS

DON'T LOOK AT IT.

FOCUS.

I WON'T LET IT TAKE YOU I WON'T LET IT GET ANYWHERE NEAR YOU.

LOOK AHEAD

THE DESERT

NOWHERE TO HIDE...

ha—

ARE YOU SURE?

LET'S SEE THE MONSTER FIND US IN THAT

NOW, QUICKLY—

IT.

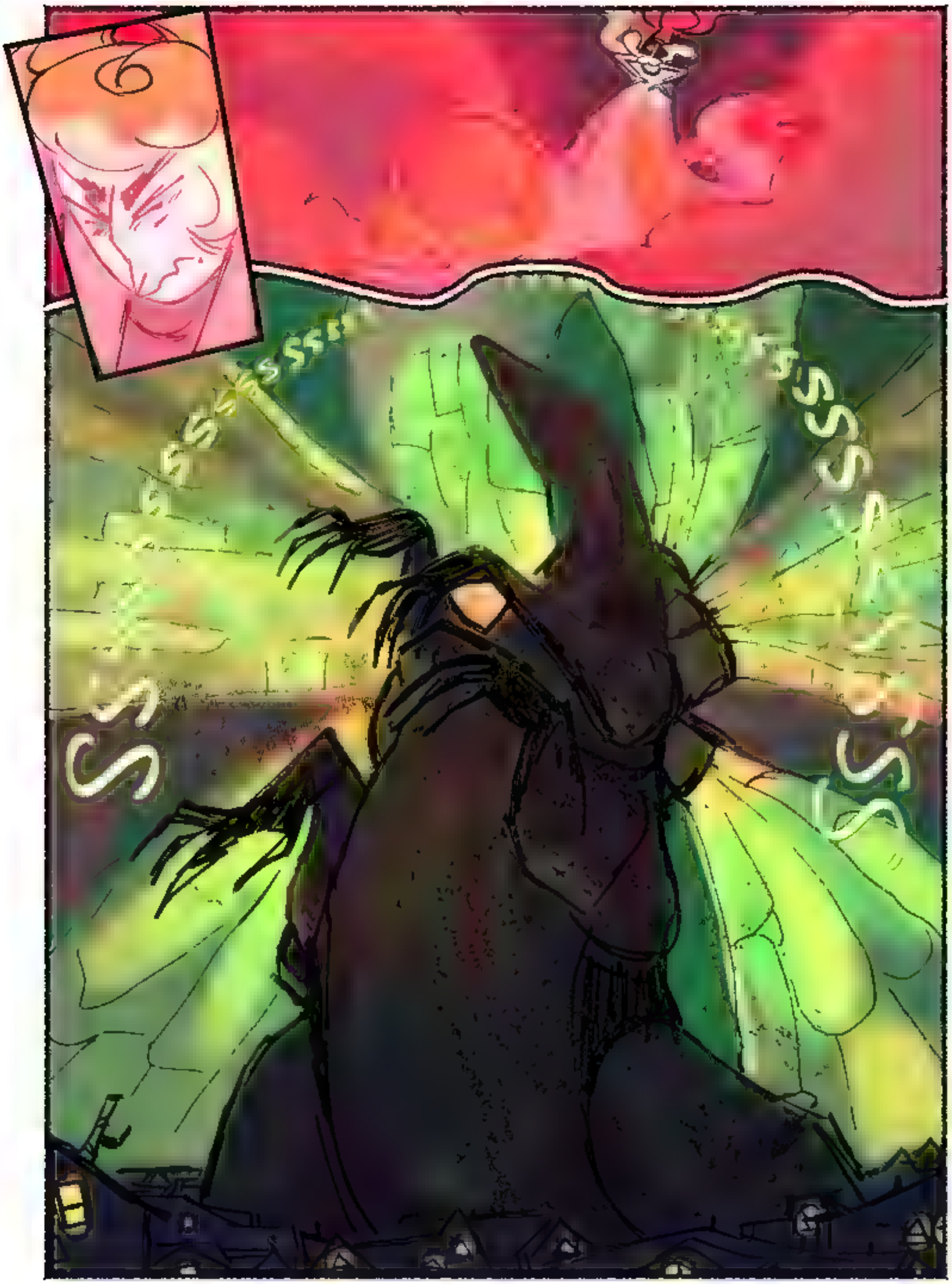
IS.

YOU.

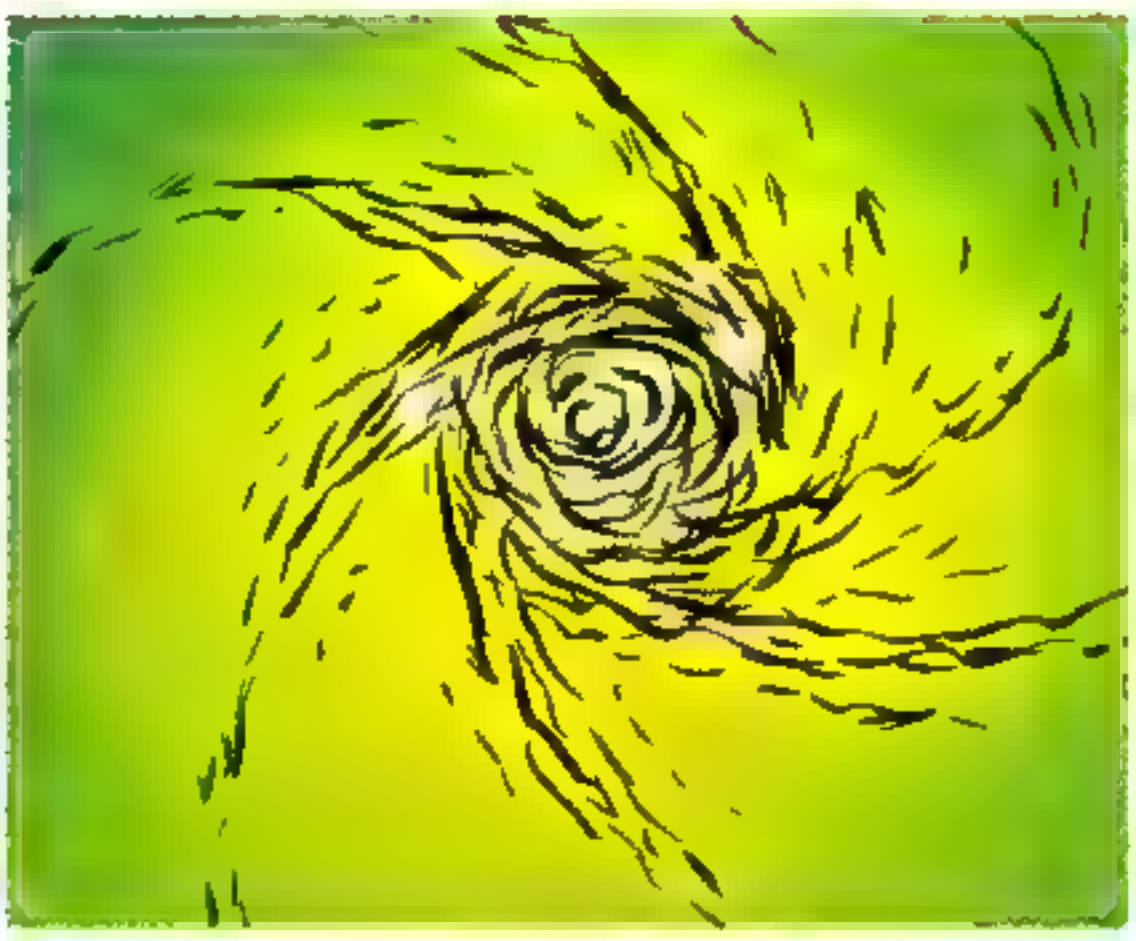
WE. WE. I. . . . WE. WE. . . WE. KNOW YOU

HA!

P-
PRETTY SHORT MEMORY, HUH! FORGOT IT WAS ME ALREADY?!


SSSS
SSSS
SSSS

SHIVER



GUEPHH

GASP
GASP

HEAR THAT?

YES.

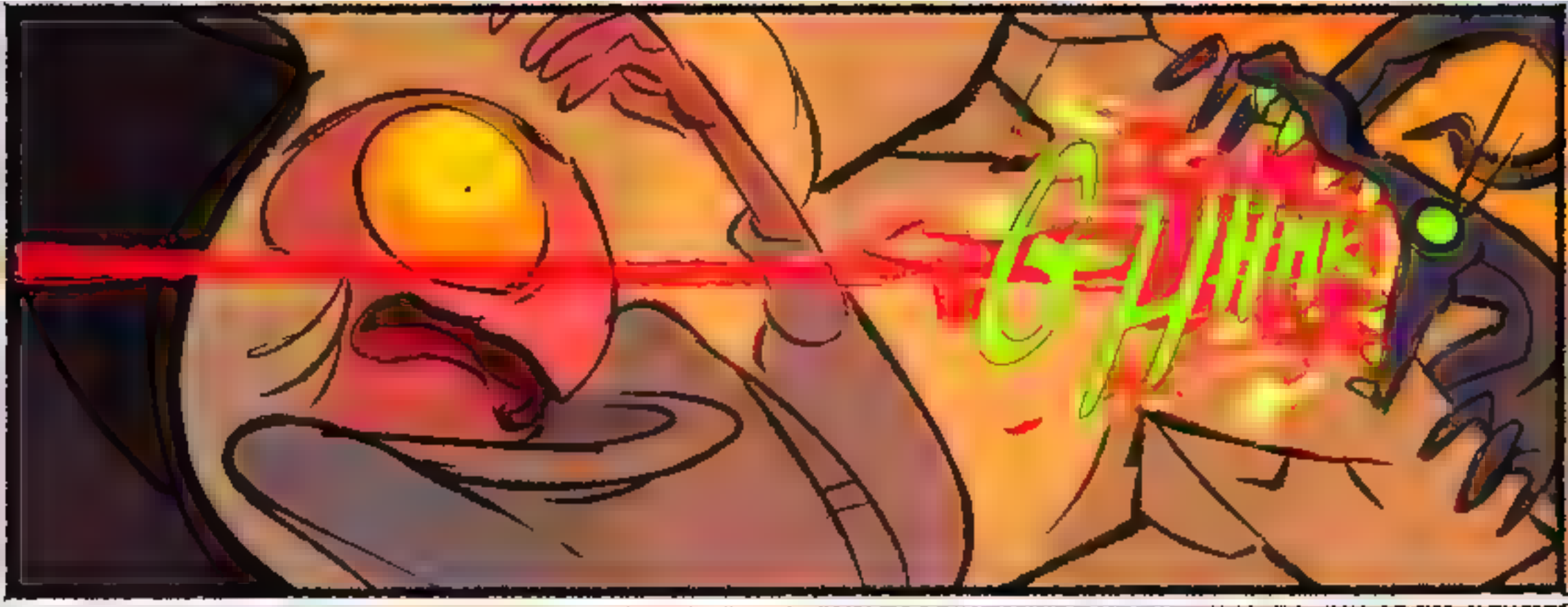
HH HHH

ESSIE, I NEED TO REST.

WE'LL SEE IF THEY'RE SO GOOD AT FINDING US THEN.

OF COURSE

WE CAN STAY HERE FOR A MOMENT NO MAGIC.


GUNSHOT

IT SOUNDS LIKE THEY'RE ALL AROUND US
...
PRETTY GOOD
THANKS

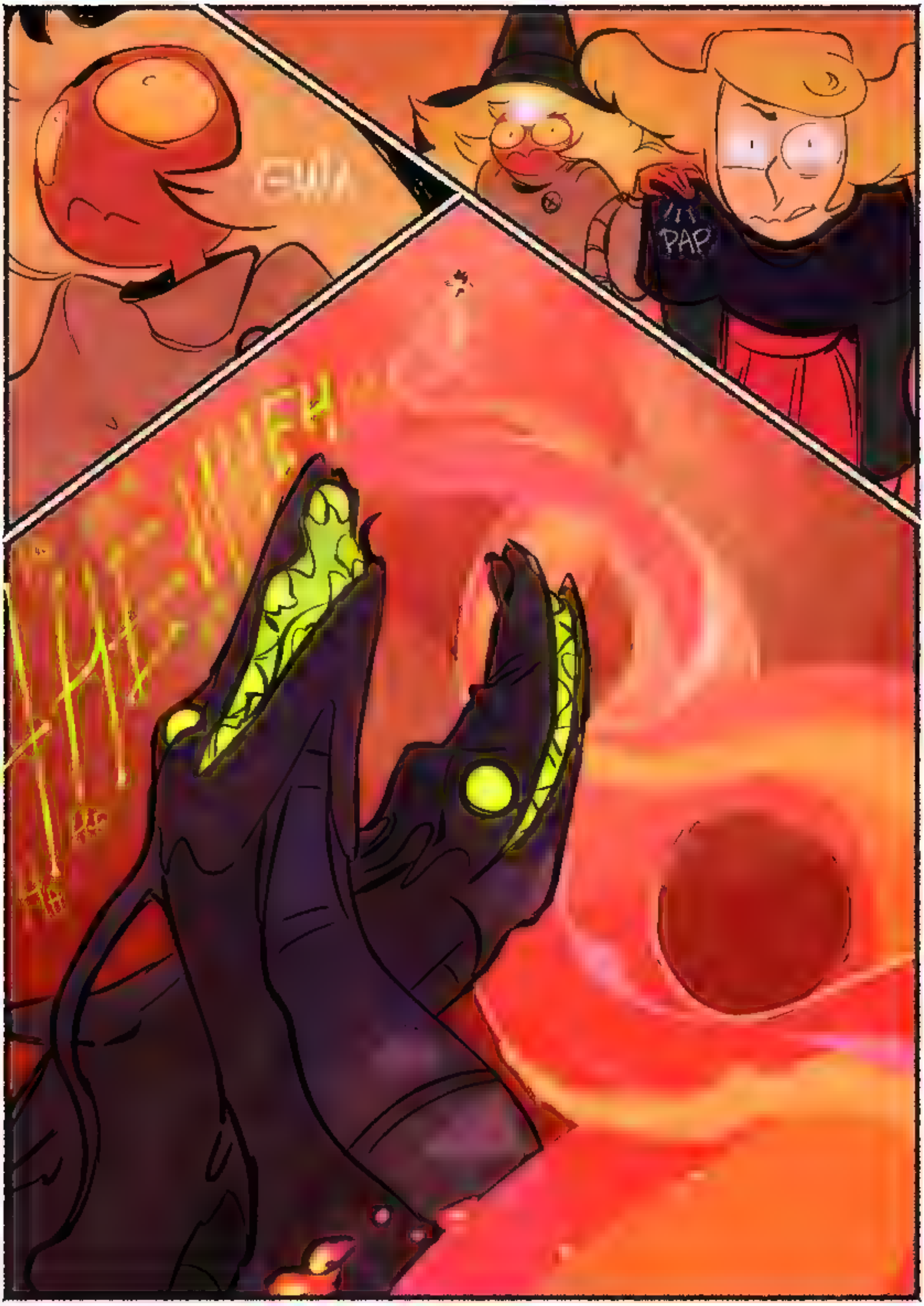
THEY'RE NOT. IN FACT, THE MORE THEY PLAY THESE GAMES WITH THEIR FORM, THE MORE WEAK THEY BECOME. LARGE FORMS ARE A HUGE ENERGY DRAIN.

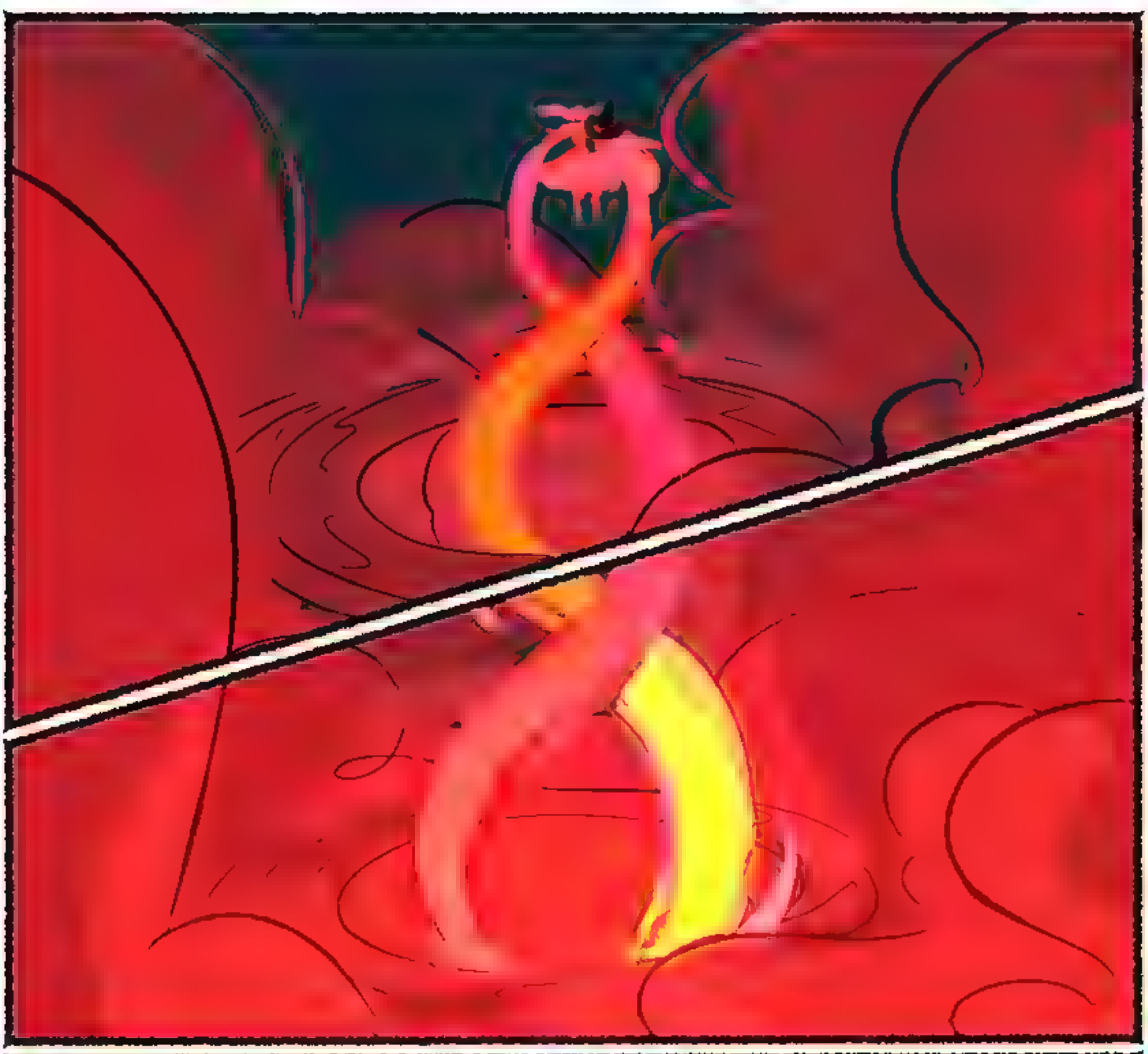
HAH. HOW TYPICAL OF HIM...

...

SSS

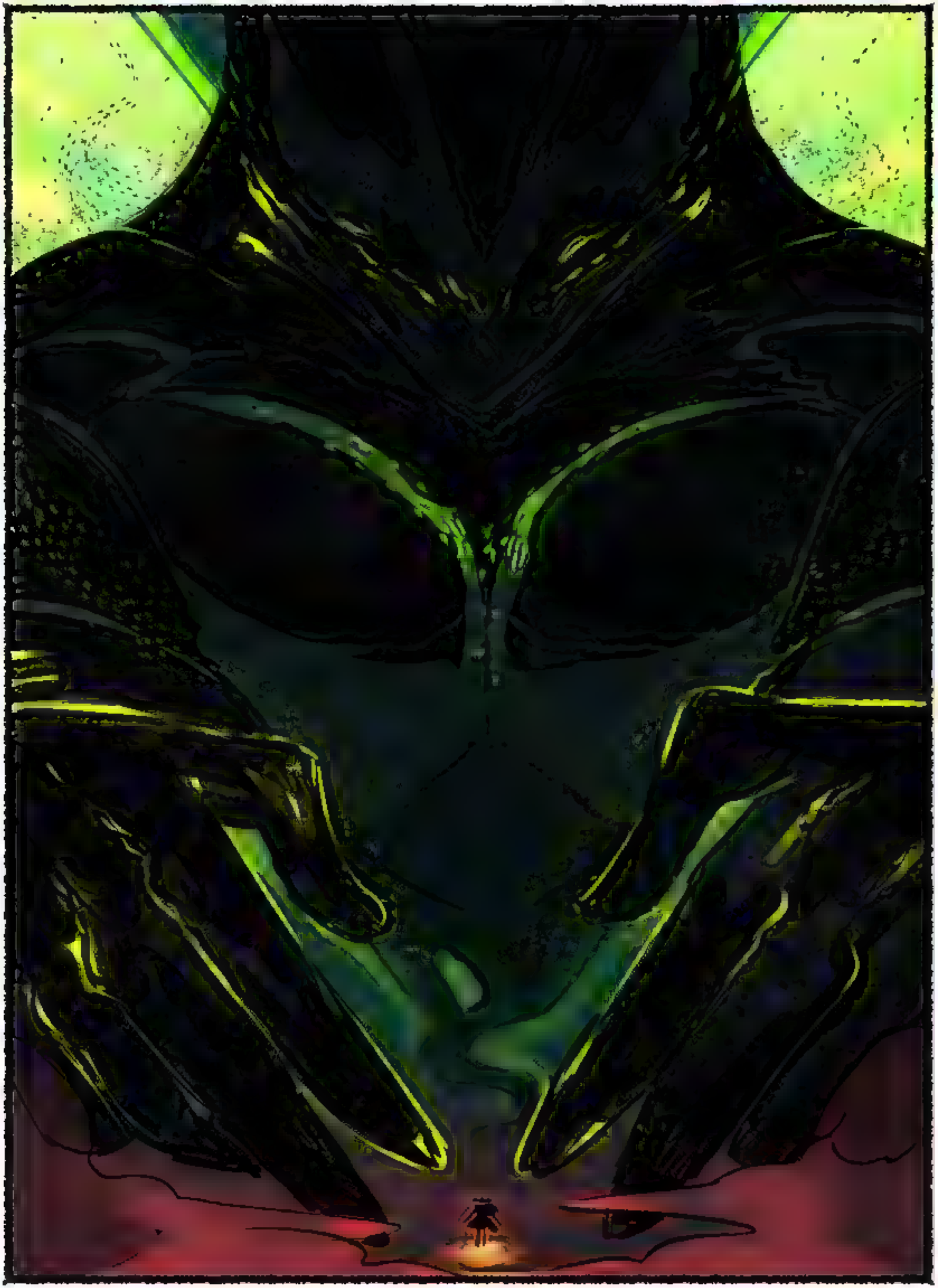
BREAK'S OVER, I'M AFRAID.


PAP
WEH
HI



EUGH

FIRE



STAY CALM

GET INTO THE CLOUDS SLOWLY.

DID THE BIG ONE SEE US?

I DON'T-

I DONT-

I- DJNT— IT

ITs

IT'S HERDING US

IT WON'T! WE WON'T LET IT!

I DON'T WANT THAT

HEY

CELINE

IT'LL SURROUND US. IT'LL SWALLOW US

ANYTHING ELSE- ANY OTHER WAY—

CELINE.

I HAVE AN IDEA

BUT-

CAN YOU DO EXACTLY AS I SAY?

GOOD. WAIT RIGHT HERE, I'LL BE BACK IN A BIT!

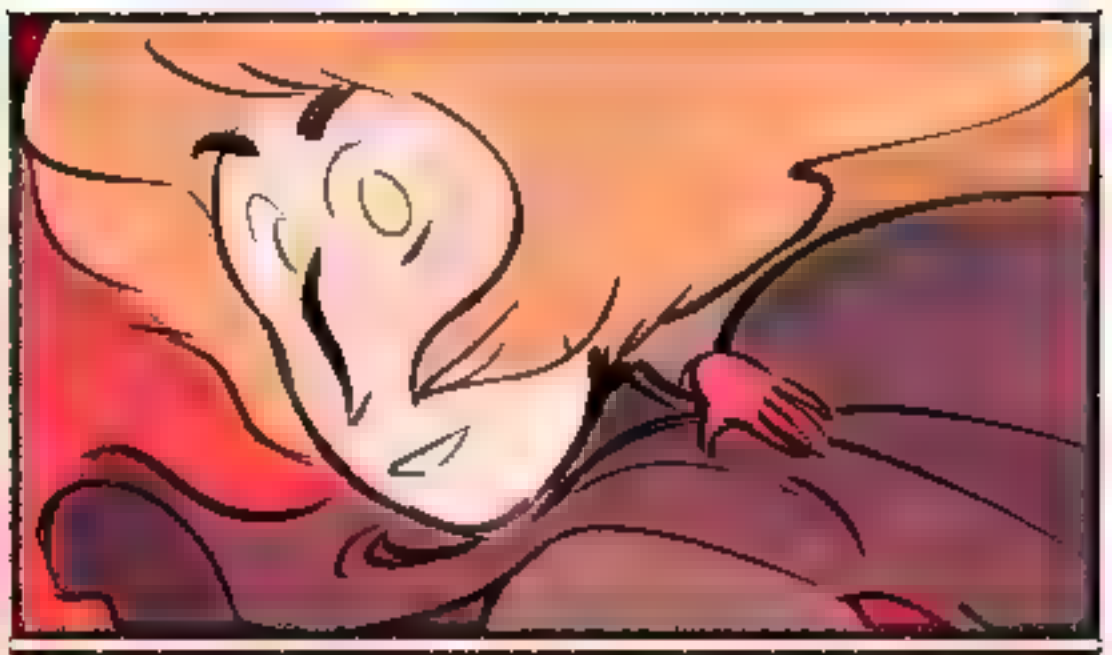
fft
fsst
fsst
HELLO!

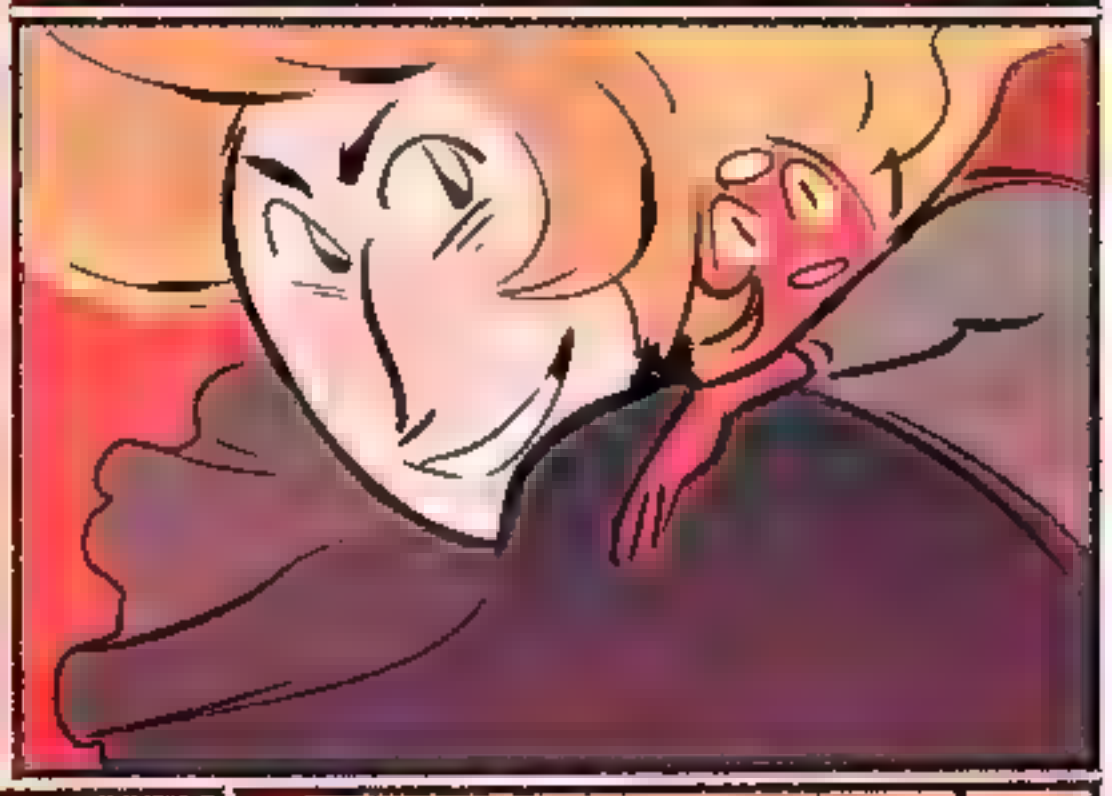
DONT LAND WITHOUT ME NOW!

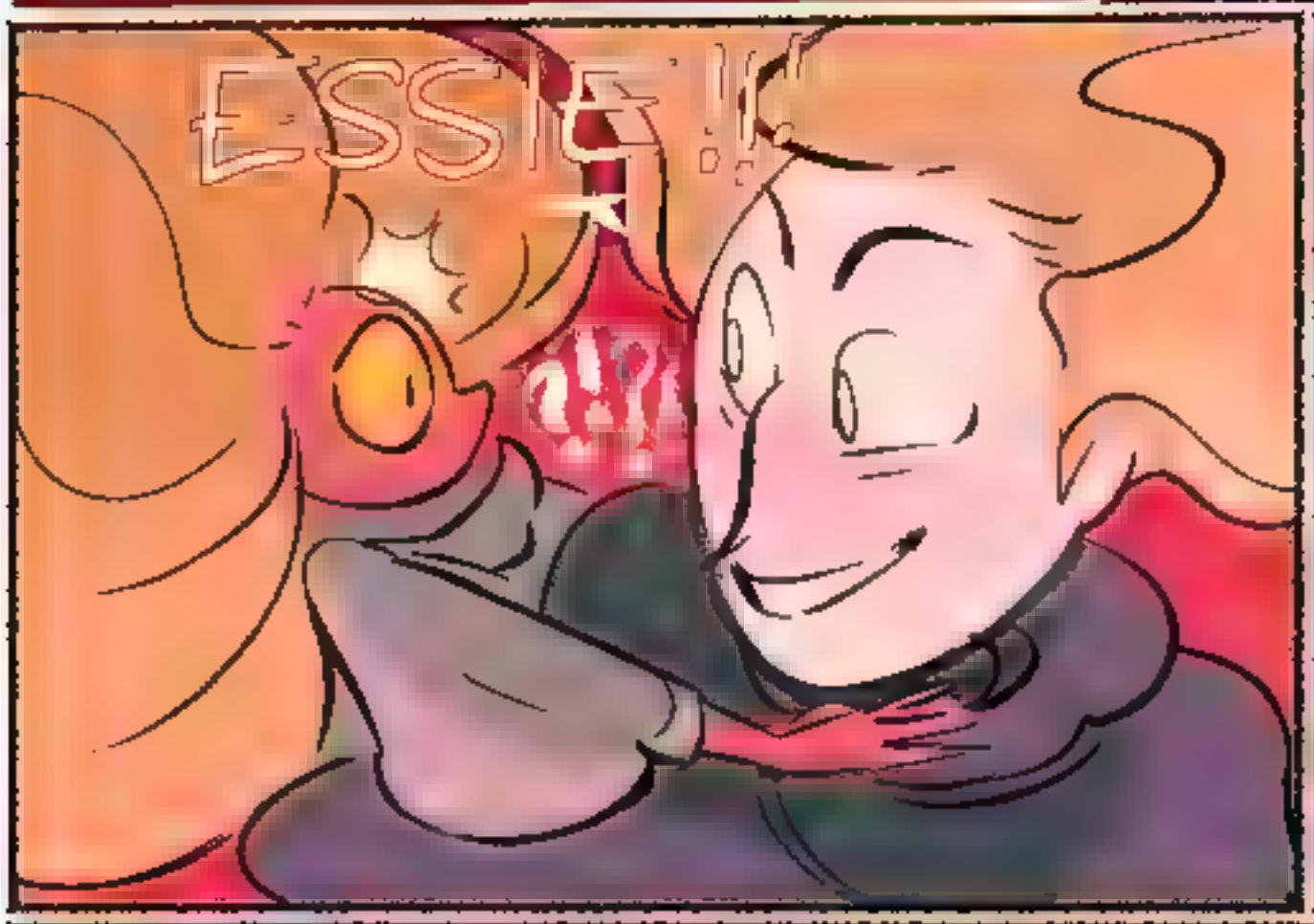
BUT DO LAND, PLEASE

NO!

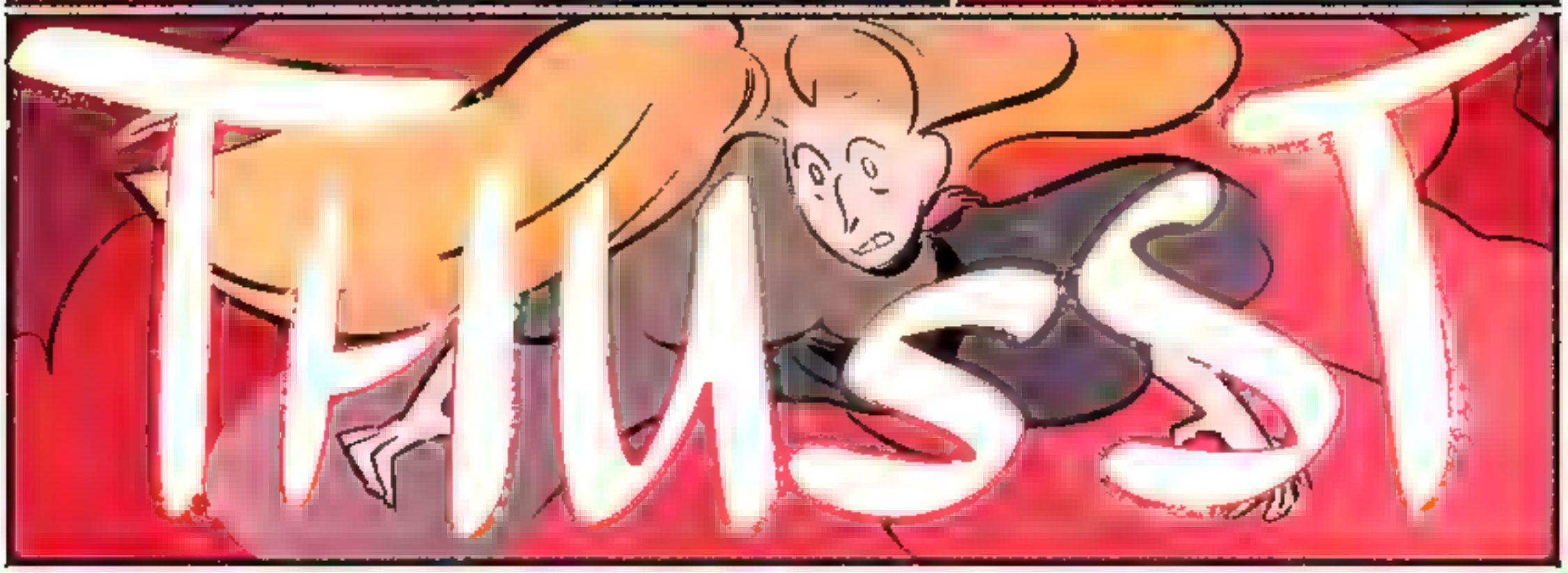
ESSHHHHH
GLASS..! OF COURSE!
HORK
THEN WHAT IF I.






ESSIE !!
OH!

THIS IS IT! THIS IS HOW WE GET THEM!


THE END

HA!

COME ON, THEN!

GRIND

TrHHSSSSSSSSS

THUNK
HA

CELINE

PAT PAT

LET'S LURE THE BIG ONE DOWN

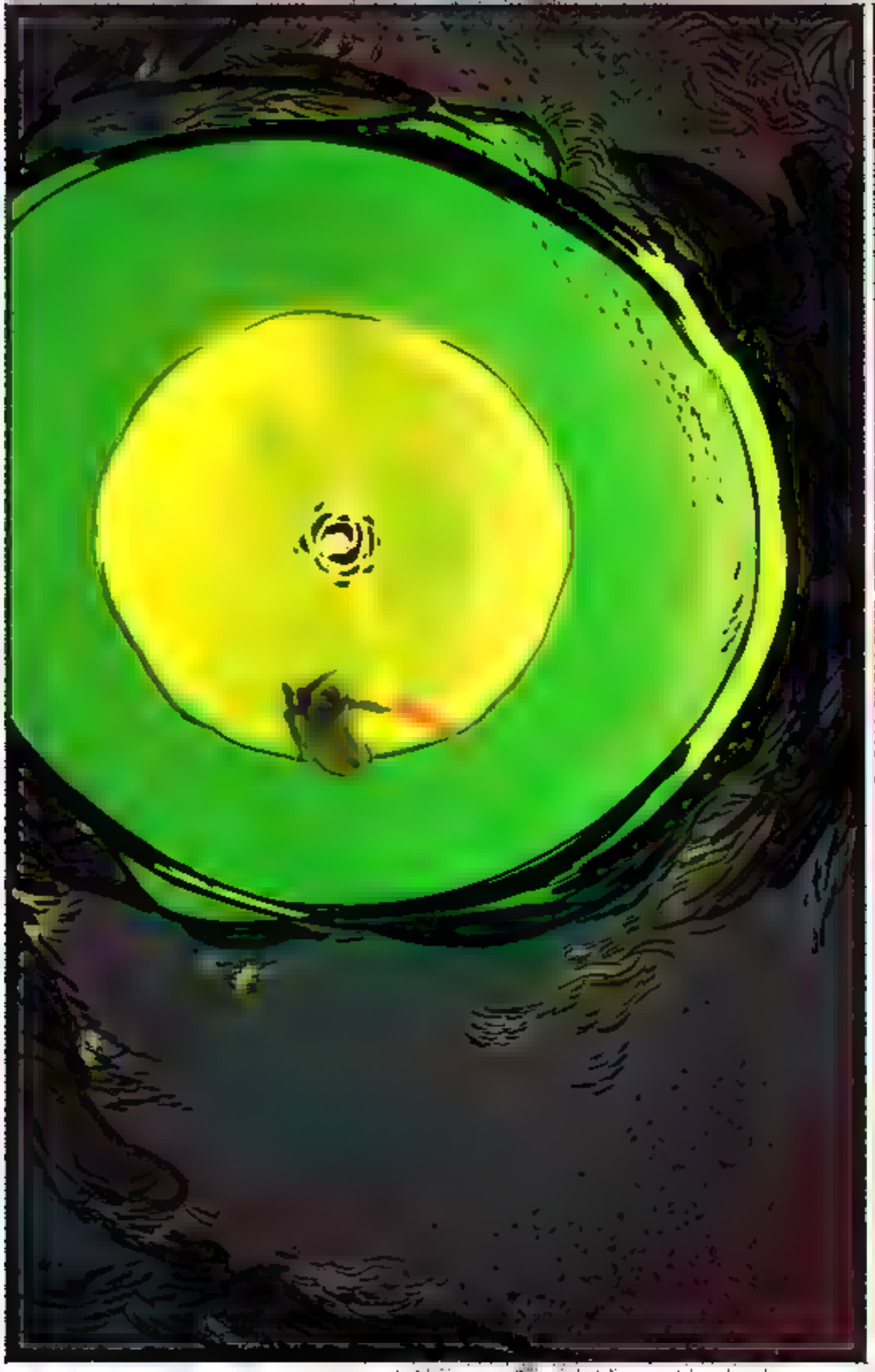
INTO THE SAND.

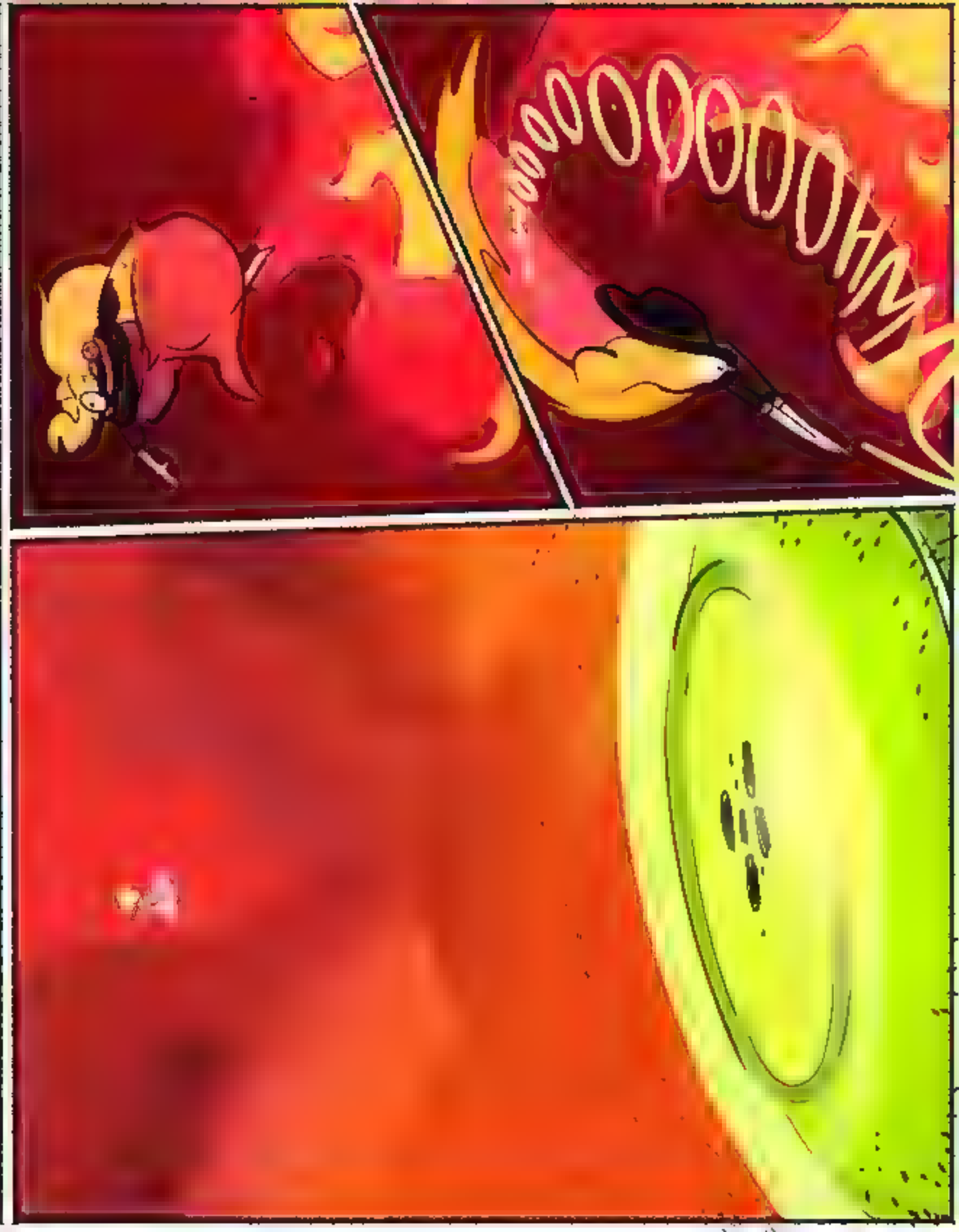
KSSS

HUH

SHLP

HLP




OOOOOOOOOHM

AAAAA

AA AAA

AA AAAAA

SO YOUR PLAN—

JUST TRUST ME

I DO ALREADY,

MON DIEU..

TELL ME ANYWAY

you..

ESSIE. I TRUST YOU.

YOU'RE NOT TRUSTWORTHY

BUT I DON'T WANT TO DIE, SO..

FOR NOW!

BUT YOU HAVE TO TELL ME WHAT WE'RE DOING

DEAL

THIS WORLD IS BROKEN.
BUT WE CAN USE THE CRACKS.

DRIVE IT INTO THE DARK, CELINE

SEAL IT UNDERGROUND

MAKE IT FALL

CELINE.

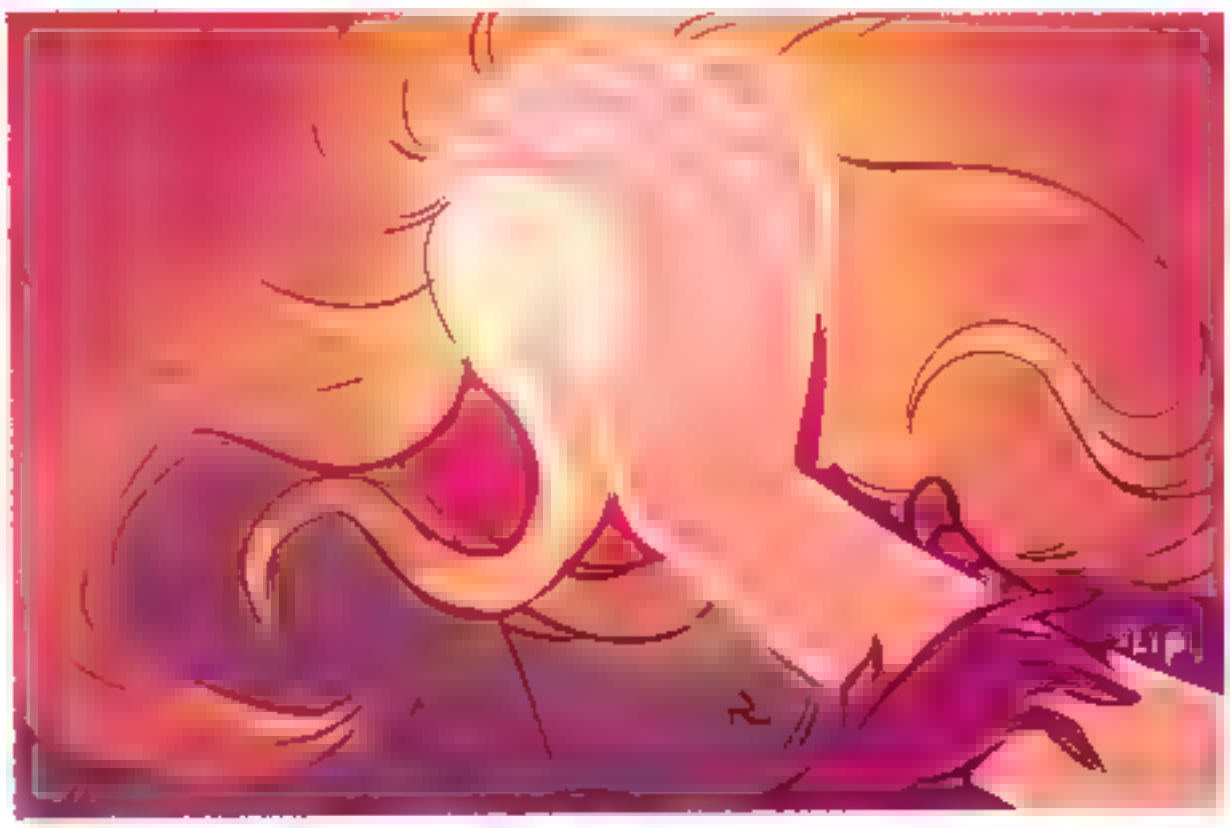
I TRUST YOU NOT TO DROP ME.

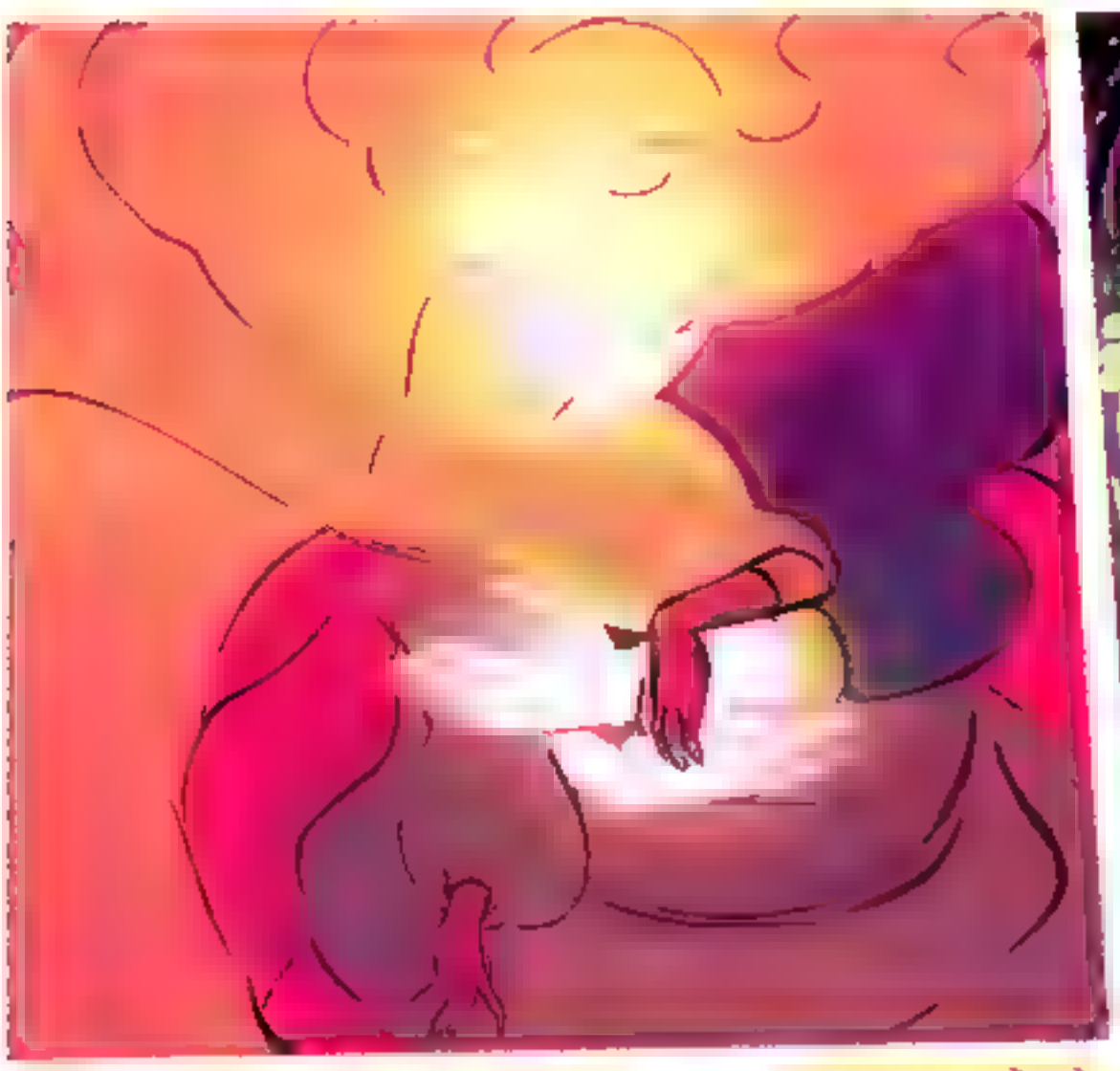
YOU'RE REALLY GOING-

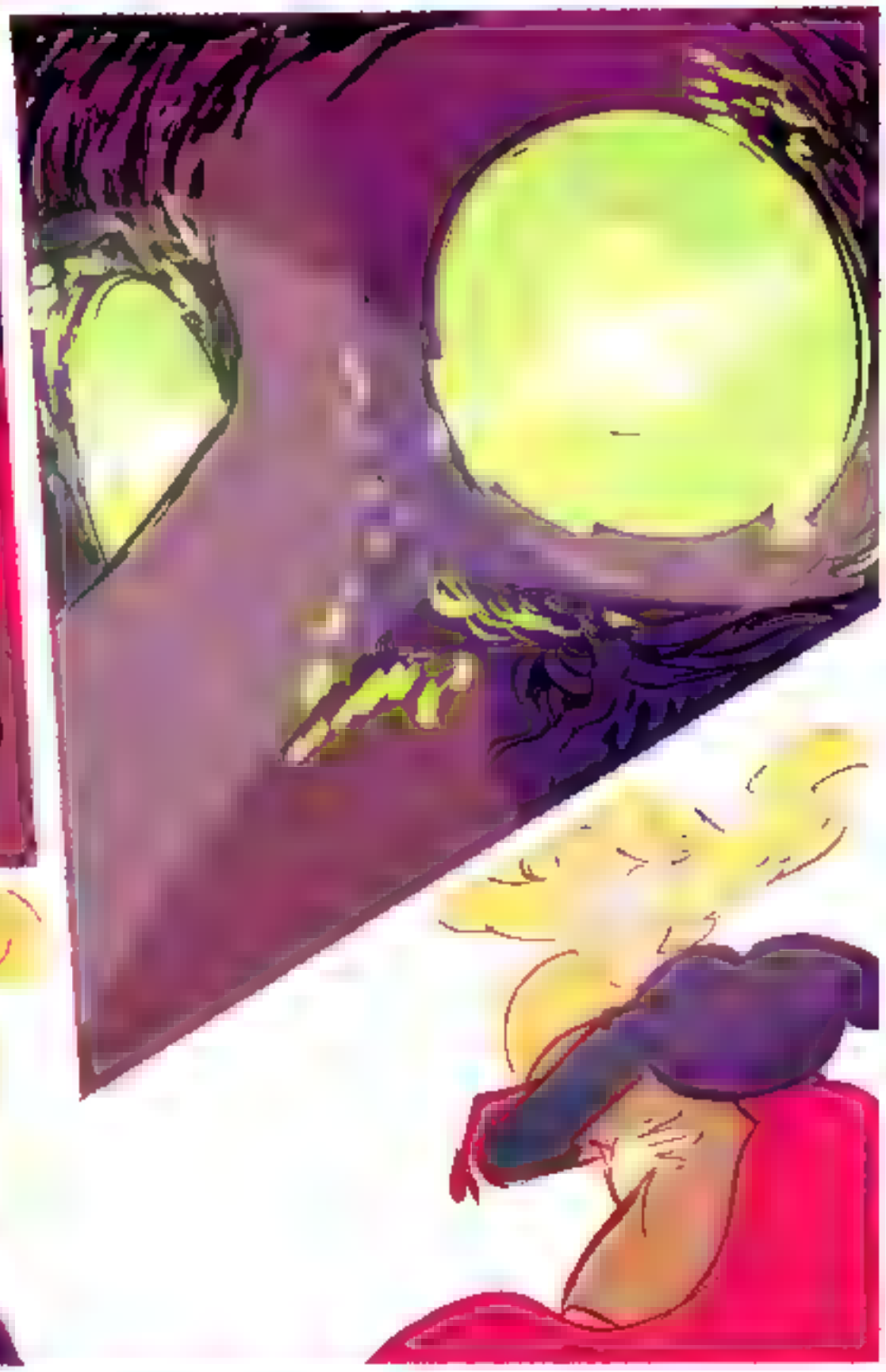
DON'T WORRY.

YOU'LL DO GREAT

EVERYTHING CAN SPARE YOU'S YOURS





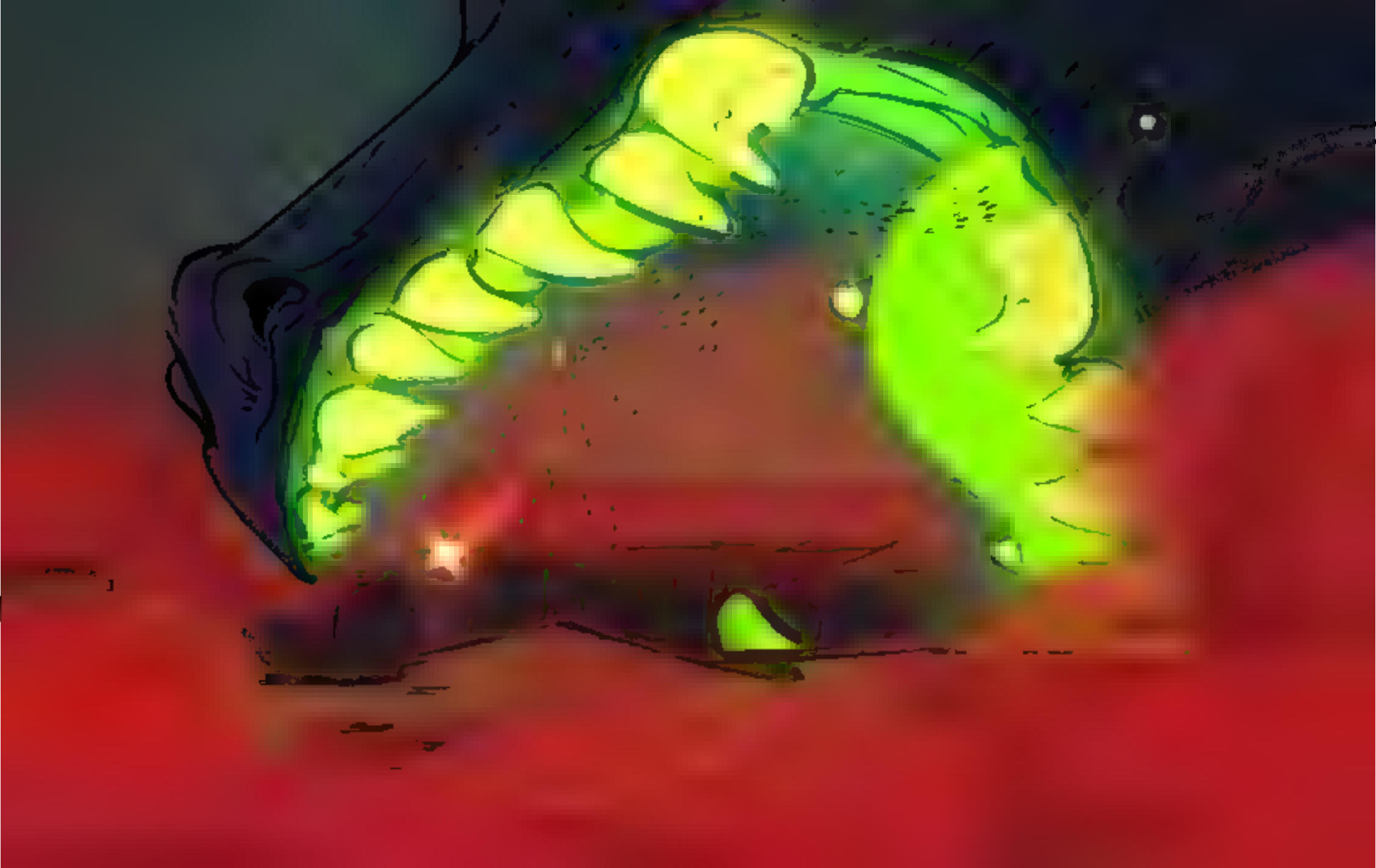


AND I'LL HOPE IT ISN'T TOO MUCH FOR BOTH OF US

SMACK

THERE JUST AND ME

FIRE CHURNING UNDER MY SKIN



KATE...

I WISH I COULD SEE YOU..

I WANT TO—I—

HEY CELINE...

KATE...? WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP?

COME HERE. LOOK OUTSIDE.

HAVE YOU NOTICED...? ABOUT THE STARS?

HMM.

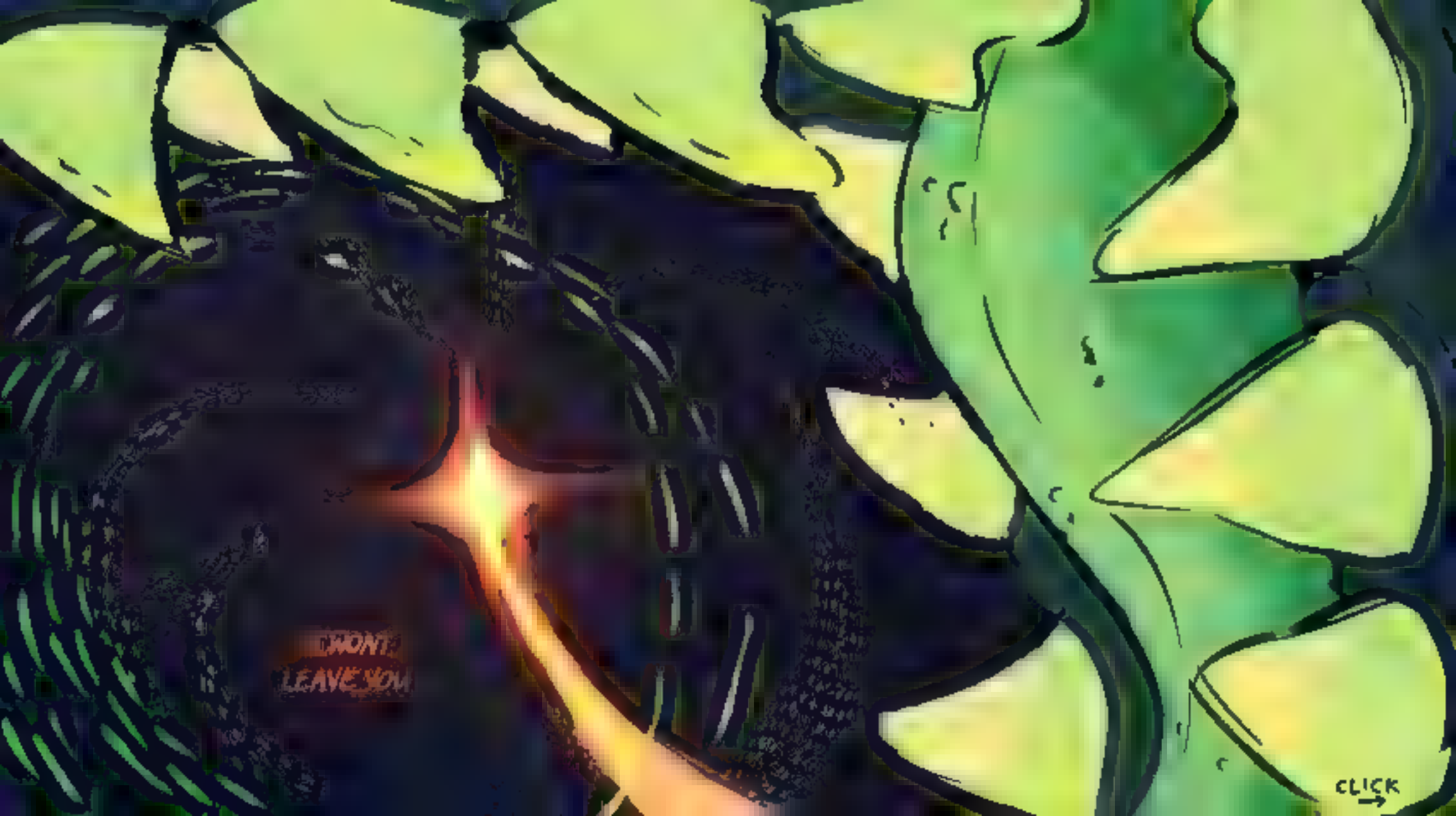
WHAT ABOUT THEM?

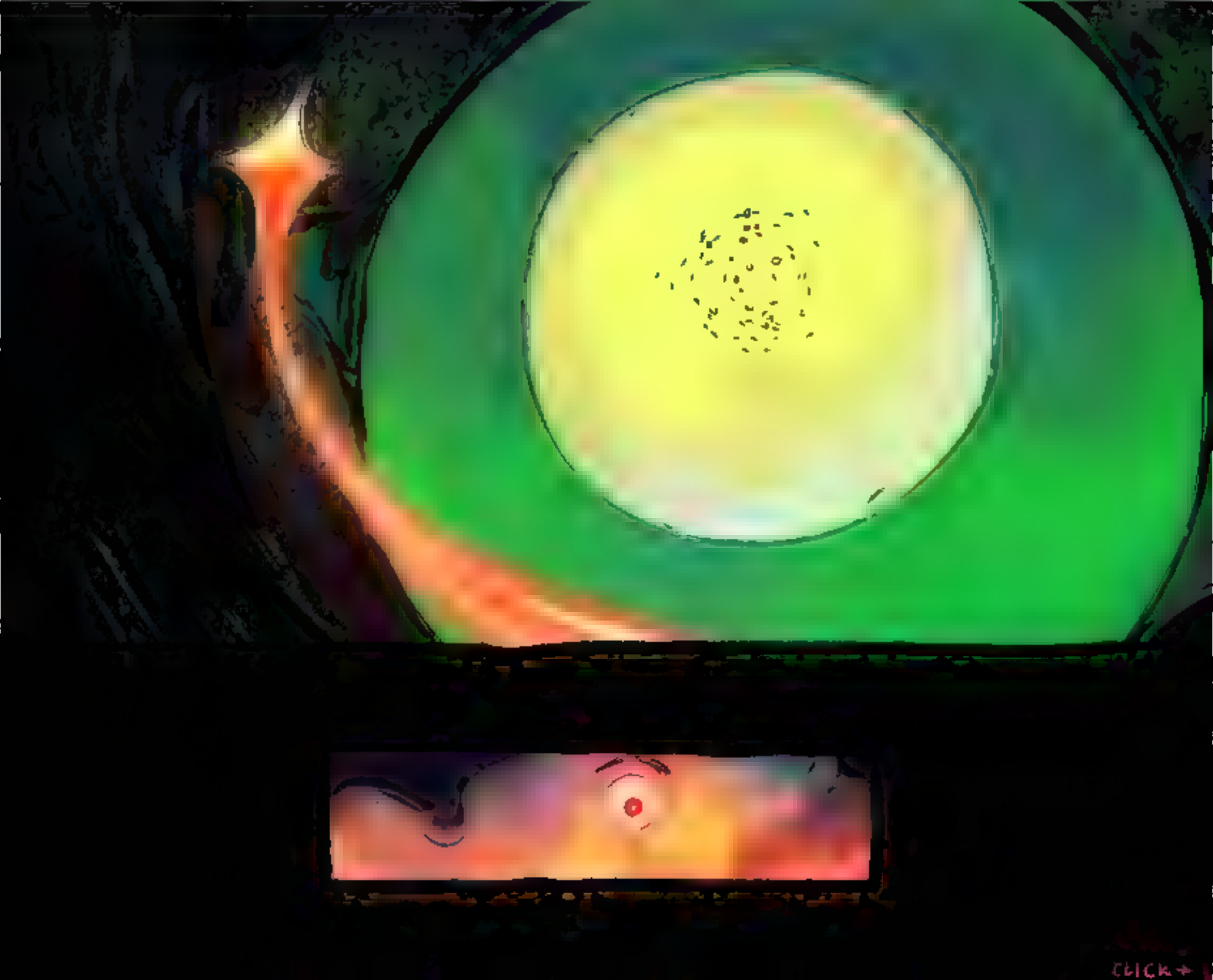
THERE ISN'T A SINGLE STAR HERE THAT'S LIKE ONE AT HOME.

DO YOU THINK THAT'S SAD, OR...?

OR?

OR IS IT EXCITING?


I WON'T
LEAVE YOU
CLICK


CLICK

CURSE OF THE CRUNCH

SCRAPE

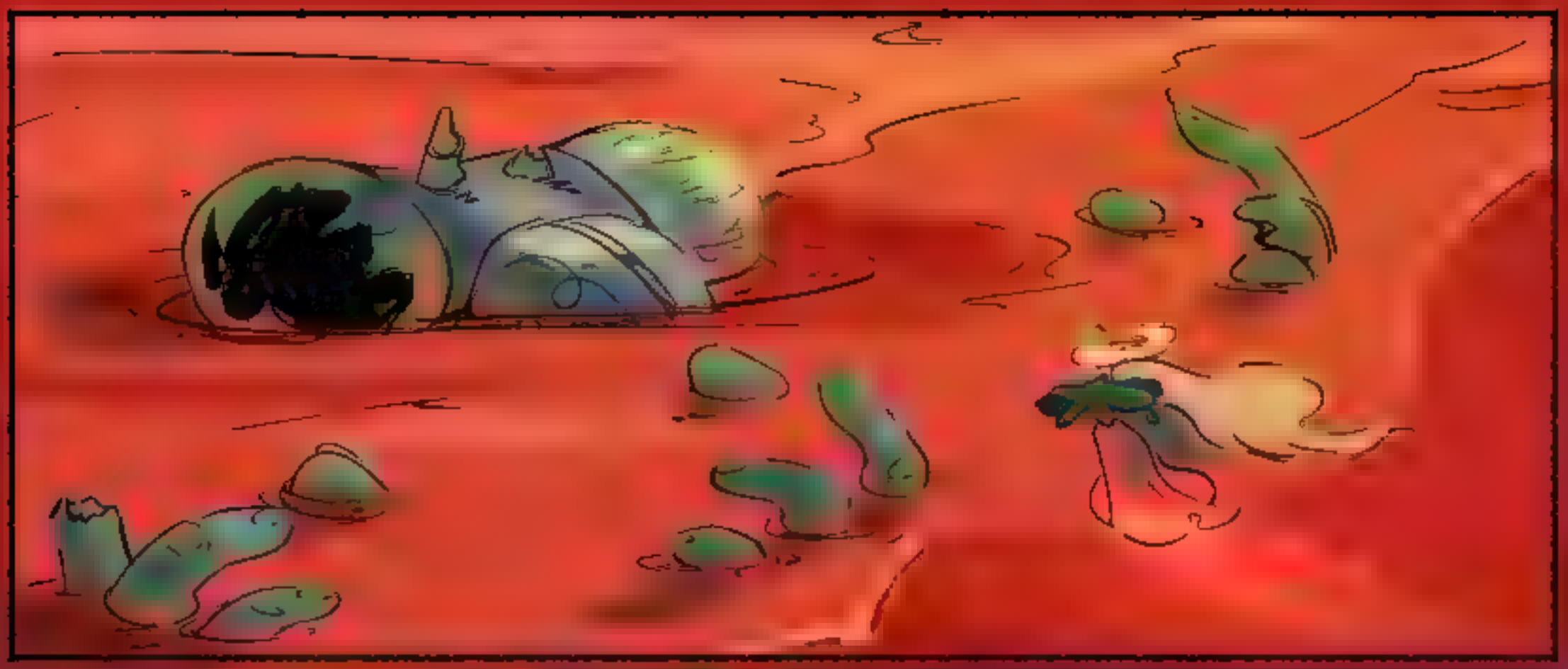
AND WE'RE THROUGH

I CAN'T SEE THEM

NOT A SINGLE ONE

WOW

HOW LONG CAN I STAY AIRBORNE WITHOUT YOU?



CH

CH

CH

MMH

...

SIGH..

YOU AGAIN, HUH?

OK, FIRST,

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I *KNOW* ITS YOU—THINGS— I'VE RUN AWAY FROM A *LOT* OF THINGS SO FAR.

BUT NONE OF THEM HAVE HAUNTED MY DREAMS AND IT- IT SUCKS-

BUT,

I MEAN, MOST IMPORTANTLY,

WHY BOTHER?

I HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH ANY OF IT, SO JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!

I'M NOT MAGIC!! I'M JUST HERE BECAUSE I DON'T WANT TO BE HOME

AND

I...

STUPID.

ESSIE

WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?!

WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL ME?

SSS?

SSS?

SEP?

WAIT!

YOU'RE THE POND THING

WHAT ARE YOU?

GROSS

HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?

NAMES

NAMES

NAMES

GLOOP

GOD, STOP!!!!

Oh

ok

HAHA GROSS JUST BE SMALL!

YOU HAVE TO HELP ME UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU WANT, OKAY?

SEPZ!

WHAT HAPPENED?

DON'T JUST WANDER OFF-

RAINA-

I WOKE UP AND YOU WERE GONE!! WHAT WERE YOU DOING?!

I- DUNNO?

SORRY I WAS GONNA LOOK FOR A WAY DOWN

YEESH WELL YEAH THATS NOT GREAT

YEAH..

THERES GOTTA BE A WAY.

LET'S JUST KEEP WALKING AROUND THE CIRCUMFERENCE OF IT I GUESS

THE UHHHH??

I MEAN AROUND IT

LETS GET OUR STUFF

...

'CMON'

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

...

IM ALRIGHT

SO, OF COURSE I WANTED TO BE AROUND OTHER HUMANS. BUT I'M GLAD IT WAS THE TWO OF YOU..

WELL WE LOVE YOU NORN! AND IT MAKES SENSE WHAT WITH YOU AND CELINE BOTH BEING TRANS-

SHE WAS GONNA AT LEAST TRY AND ADOPT YOU

HA!

I FEEL LIKE... I DUNNO. I LOOK UP TO HER. SOMEONE'S MAKING A LIFE IN THIS WEIRD PLACE

AND SHE'S MAKING MY SORT OF LIFE

AND THE TWO OF YOU ARE OUR FAMILY AS WELL, OF COURSE!

AWW!

YQ!!! WE LOVE YOU TOO!!

THANKS, YQ

NOW, THEN

HOP ON, YOU TWO! FROM HERE WE MAY BE ABLE TO GLIDE OVER A FEW LEVELS TO THE CENTER OF THE FOREST.

WOW... THE CENTER-

RIGHT

I- YEAH

LET'S GO.

KATE-

YOU READY?

?

HM?

HM?

WHERE...?

AH, YOU'RE UP!

HOW'D YOU—

OH, THIS?

WE'RE NOT THE FIRST TO CAMP HERE, IT SEEMS'

THERE WERE SOME THINGS LEFT BEHIND HERE FROM WHEN THIS WAS ONCE A SERIES OF TOWERS

BUT. LONG GONE NOW.

YOU SEEM TO KNOW A LOT ABOUT IT.

WELL. OF COURSE I DO!

HERE, TRY THIS

I DID MY BEST... THERE'S A LARDER FARTHER DOWN THE BURIED TOWER.

THERE WERE A FEW THINGS THERE. DRIED AND NOT

LET'S SEE HOW IT TURNED OUT'

CRUNCH

LE

OH. WHATEVER-

GIVE ME THAT.

GAUGH IT'S HOT !!

PHEW

...

TSS

SO IT'S OKAY?

IT IS

CELINE?

MM?

HUMANS ARE

TERRIBLY FRAGILE

ARENT THEY?

WERE-

...

I GUESS WE ARE

YOU OUGHT TO ACT LIKE IT

YOU COME INTO THIS WORLD LIKE YOU KNOW HOW TO COME OUT OF IT IN ONE PIECE

AND I DRAGGED YOU INTO THINGS WITH NO IDEA HOW DIFFICULT IT WOULD BE

FOR RAINA IT WAS A QUEST..

AND YOU-

YOU WANTED POWER, DIDNT YOU?

I GAVE YOU WHAT YOU WANTED.

DIDN'T I?

TRADING SOMETHING BACK DOESNT CHANGE THE FACT THAT YOU TOOK WITHOUT ASKING

TOOK.

YOU DONT UNDERSTAND-

HERE, WE HAVE MAGIC AND NO NAMES.

YOU HAVE NAMES AND NO MAGIC.

I ONLY TURNED THE WHEEL AROUND OUR WAY

MAGIC IS THE SELF.

HUMANS HAVE AN EVOLVING, INTENSE SELFHOOD THAT NO DENIZEN OF THIS PLACE COULD FULLY COMPREHEND

I DIDNT TAKE THAT FROM YOU.

YOU TRADE FROM THAT SELF ALL THE TIME-YOU BOND, EVEN WITH THINGS WHO ARENT HUMAN.

AND THAT AFFORDS YOU A BAFFLING AMOUNT OF STRENGTH

HOW DO YOU TURN YOUR IDENTITY INTO WEAPONS? INTO FLAMES?

AND THE MORE I KNOW YOU, THE MORE I-

!

WELL THAT'S JUST IT, ISN'T IT?

WITHOUT THAT TURN OF THE WHEEL, YOUR NAME IS ALL YOU HAVE.

SOMEONE TRIED TO TAKE RAINA'S NAME.

WHEN I USED OUR LINK TO CHECK ON HER, SHE WAS NOWHERE... I ONLY SAW DARKNESS

I'D NEVER PROMISED TO PROTECT ANYONE BEFORE-

CELINE- I WAS WRONG TO MAKE YOU COME WITH ME

PLEASE GO HOME

I WAS LYING

I WOULD NEVER TRY TO TAKE BACK YOUR POWER-

SO

PLEASE-

I'LL BRING YOUR FAMILY BACK TO YOU, YOU DON'T HAVE TO-

ESS E

PAT

TWP

LISTEN

GLUCK

WOW

THAT'S STILL BUGS

OK

OK OK

COME WITH ME I NEED TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING.

DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHY I BROUGHT YOU UP HERE?

NOT REAL-

OOP

I SUPPOSE YOU'RE SATISFIED?

HAHAHA

HAHAHAHA

HE "HENE"

"HA HA HA HA HA

HEY

NOW WE'RE EVEN!

GOOD!

IM NOT GOING HOME

FROM NOW ON, WE LISTEN TO EACH OTHER. LIKE FRIENDS

OK?

YOU TELL ME WHAT YOU'RE DOING.

WE DON'T THREATEN EACH OTHER.

- AND WE SET EVERYTHING RIGHT TOGETHER DEAL?

DEAL!!

THEN LET'S GET READY TO GO

OK

HOW DID YOU GET THIS HAT BACK, ANYWAY? I THOUGHT YOU DROPPED IT BACK IN THE DESERT, WHILE WE WERE FLYING

HOW DID YOU FIND IT?

I GOT IT BACK!

...

IS THAT.. NOT HOW IT TYPICALLY WORKS?

...

I SUPPOSE AS LONG AS YOU DONT LIE TO ME, I CANT FAULT YOU FOR BEING A WEIRD FAIRY

I PROMISE TO DO MY BEST TO ACT LIKE A-

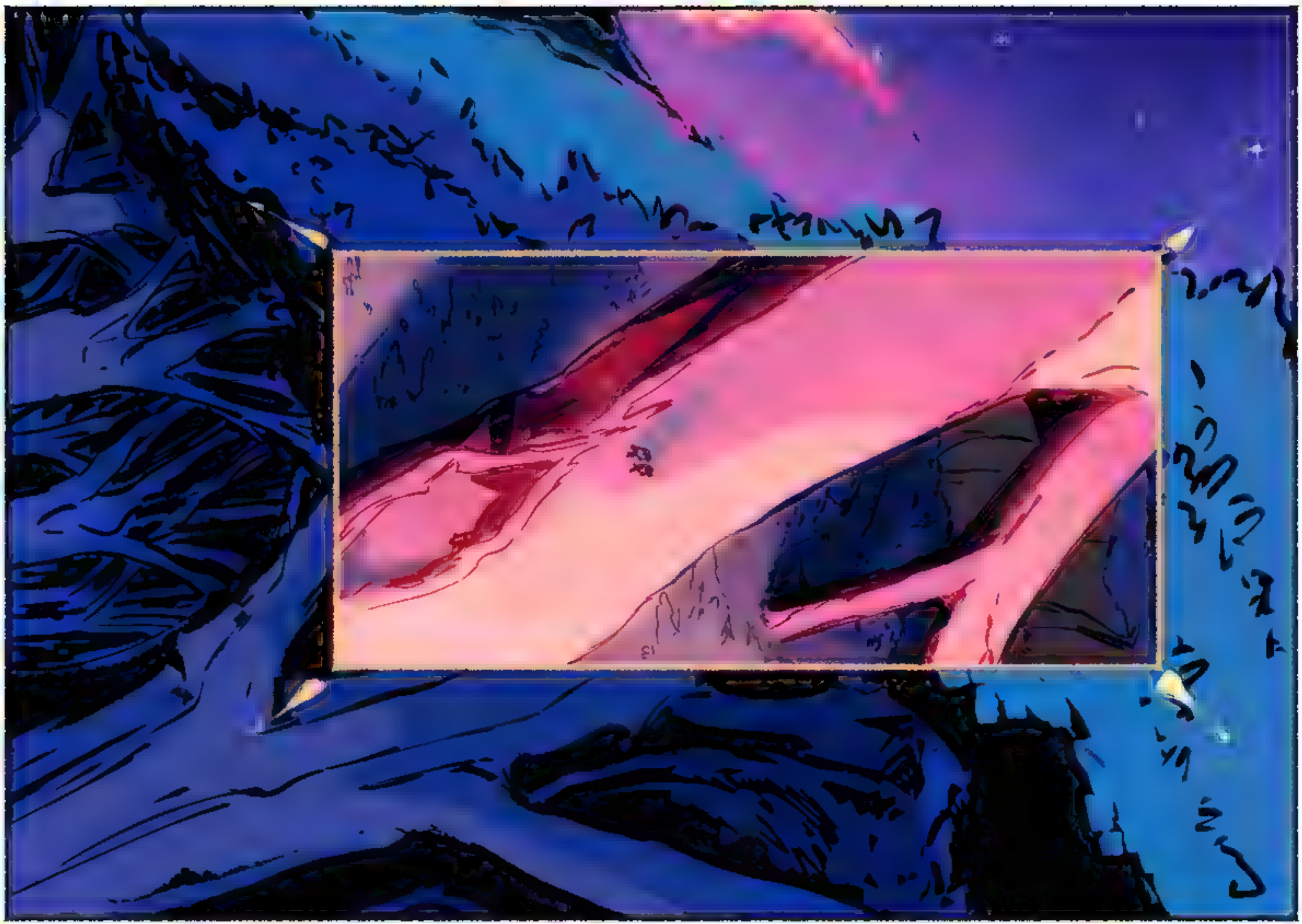
AH-

SOME KIND OF- ESM

PERSON!

HA-HA

I LOOK FORWARD TO IT



SEP

I GUESS I DON'T HAVE TO ASK IF YOU SLEPT, HUH?

WE JUST NEED TO GET DOWN-

YOU SHOULD'VE BROUGHT SOMEONE ELSE..

SHUT UP

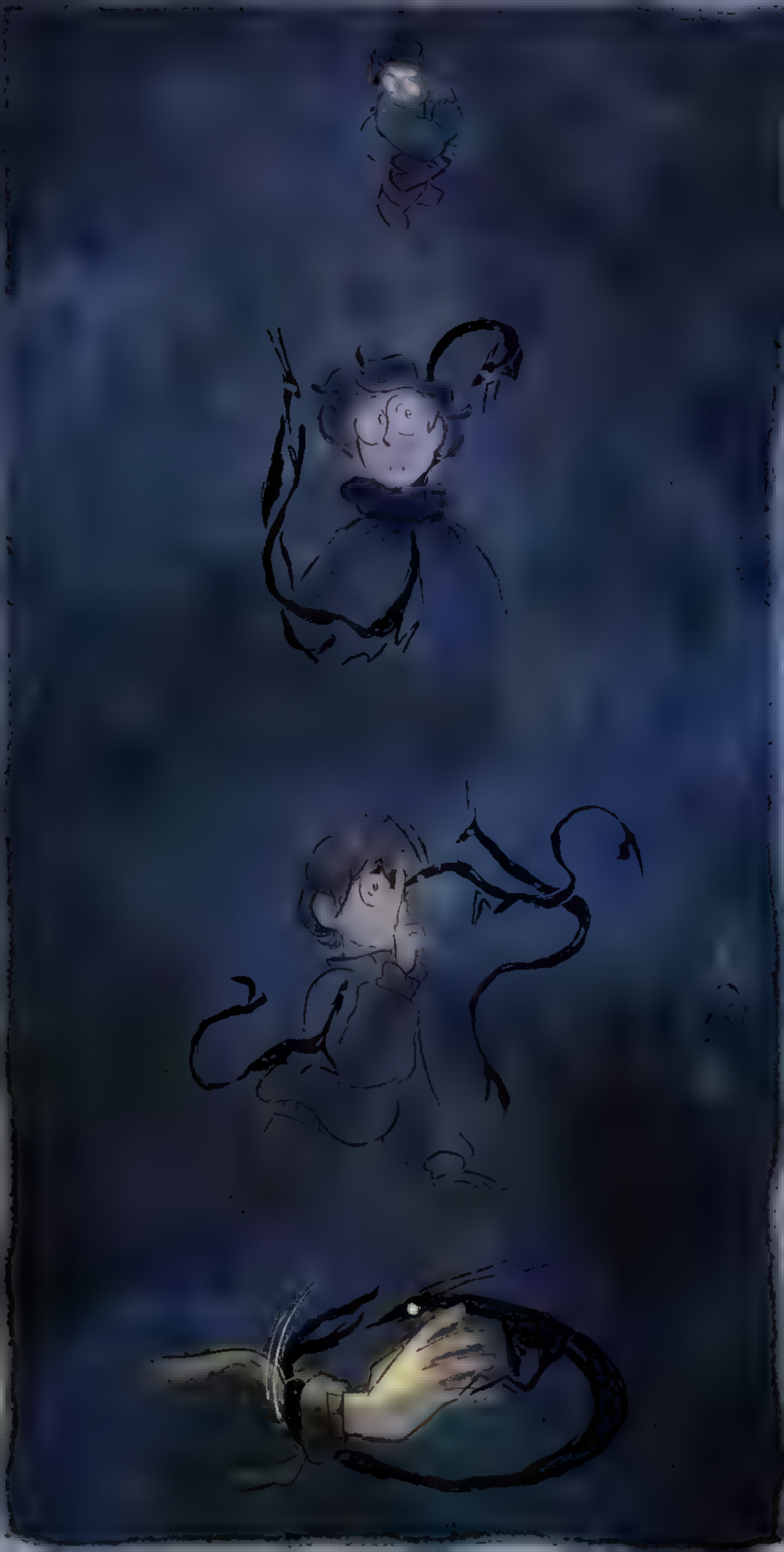
SIGH

SEP?

I REALLY DONT KNOW WHAT TO DO, KID.

I'LL KEEP THESE SAFE FOR YOU, AT LEAST

THAT'S ALL I C
DO, I GUE

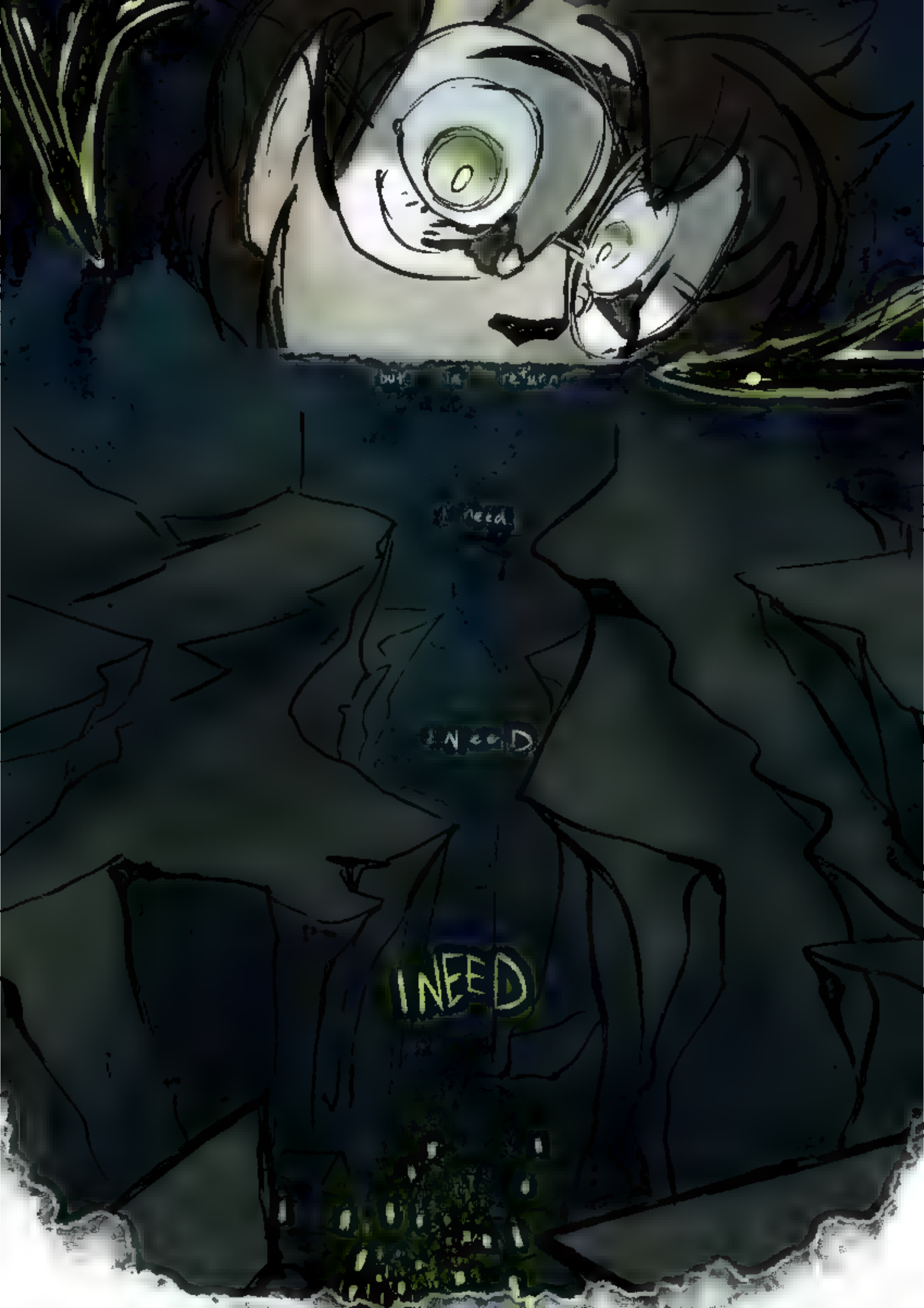


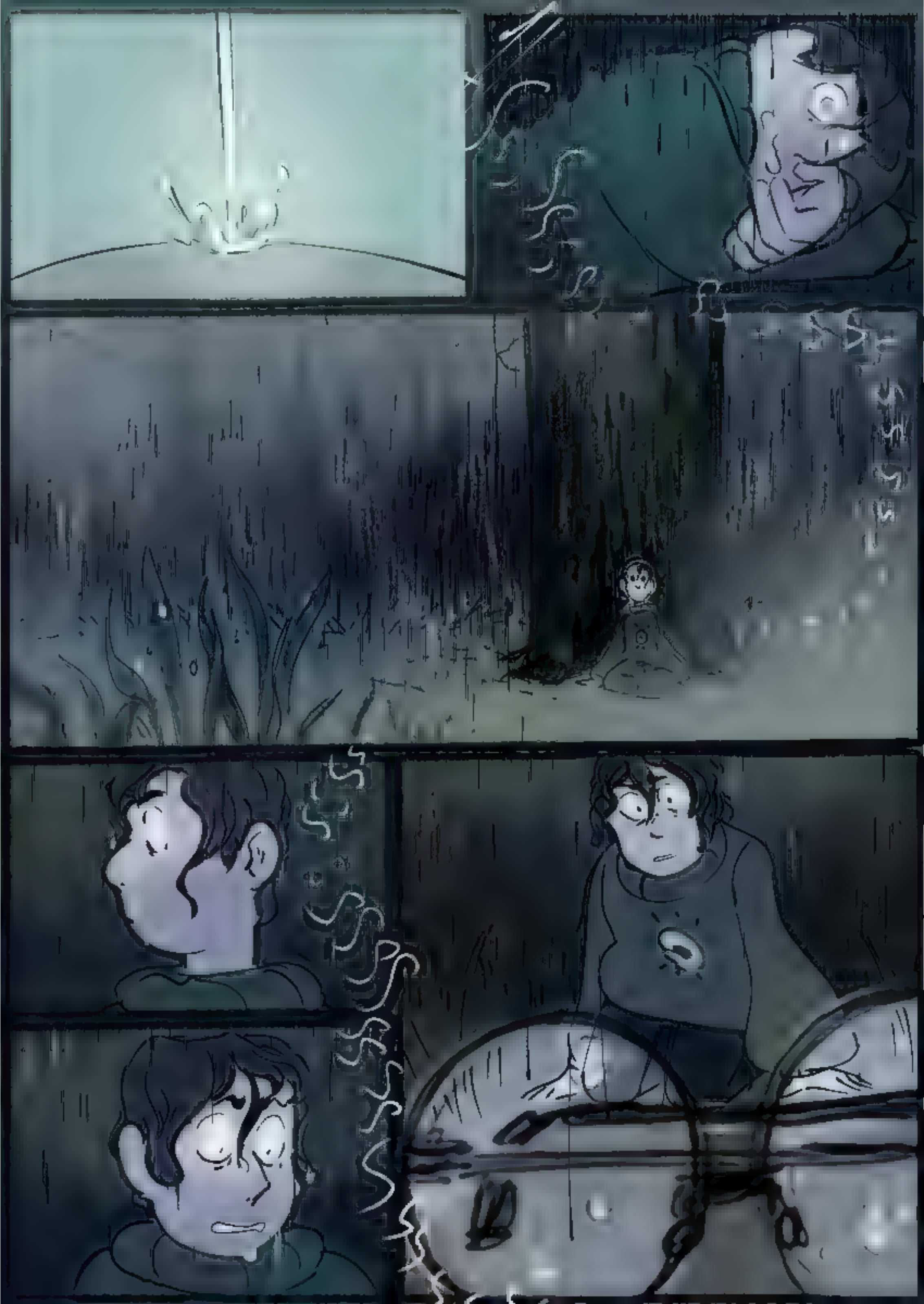
do you

wanna to know

do you want to know everything?

I can tell you everything


I need
I NEED
I NEED



RAWA

RAINA ?

SHE WOULDN'T LEAVE ME

DREAM

RAWA

SEP

SEP

RAINA
STAY BACK
ITs LOOKING FOR YOU
you
you
you

THEY LISTENED BEFORE

SLAM

STOP IT!

LOOK- I AM HERE. STOP IT

BACK OFF

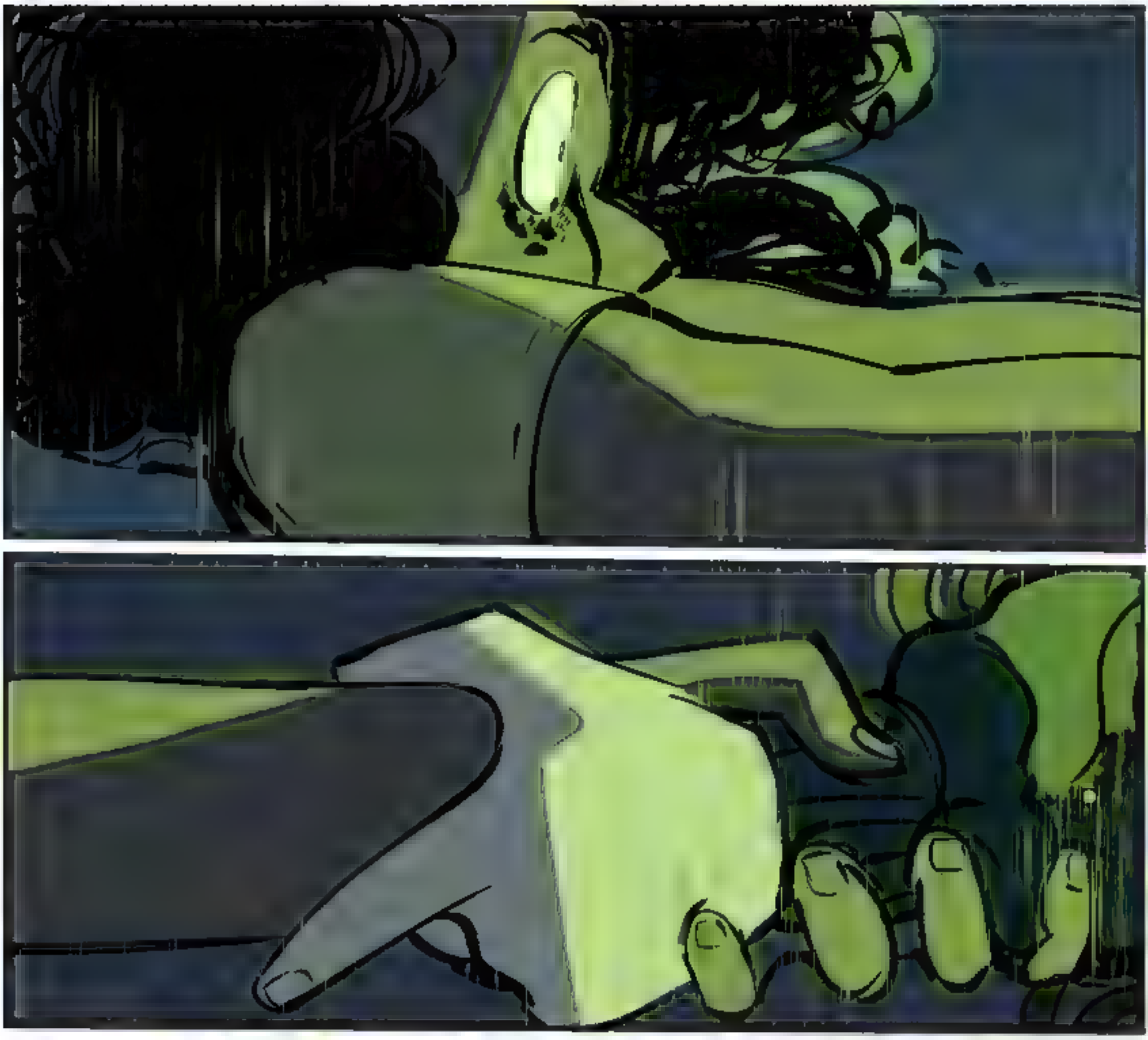
WHAT ARE YOU DOING

THATS RIGHT

THAT'S RIGHT

WE HAVE TO

GET AWAY



SLIP

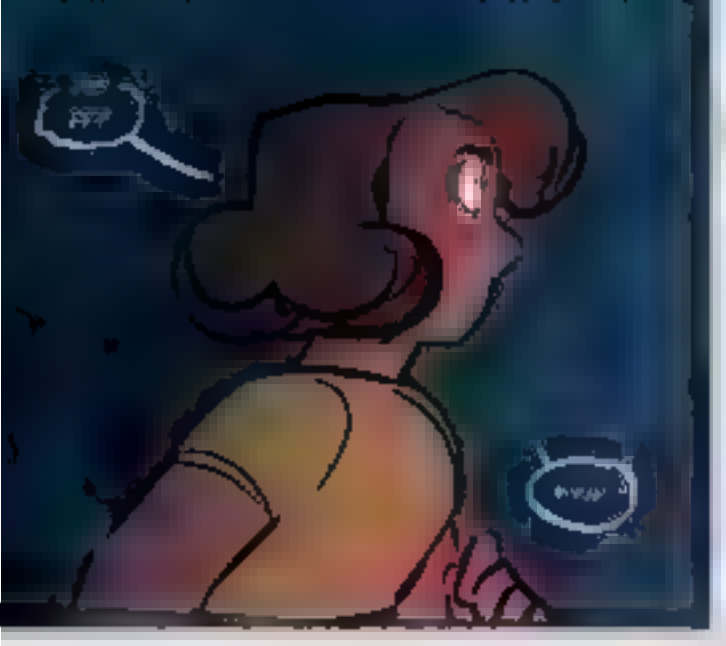
CLENCH

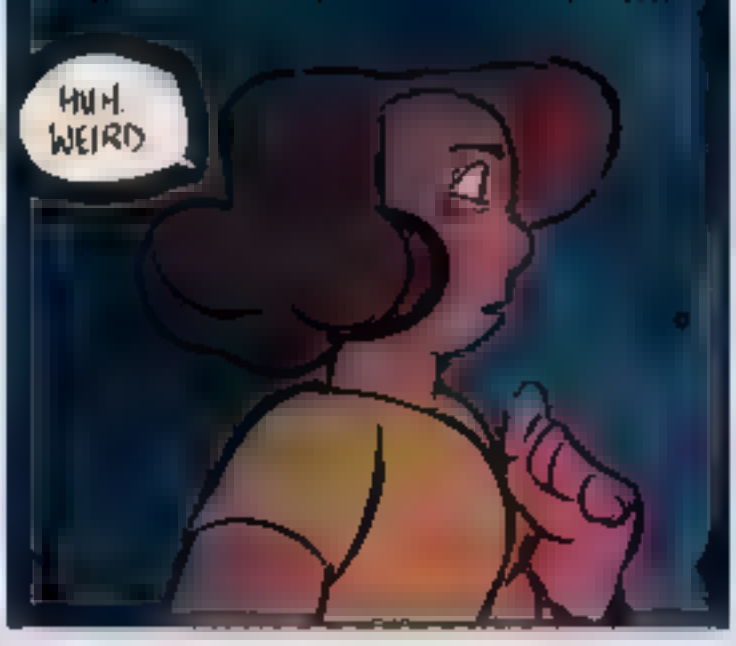
DID THEY GET DOWN-

I DONT KNOW. I MEAN, HOW WOULD WE?

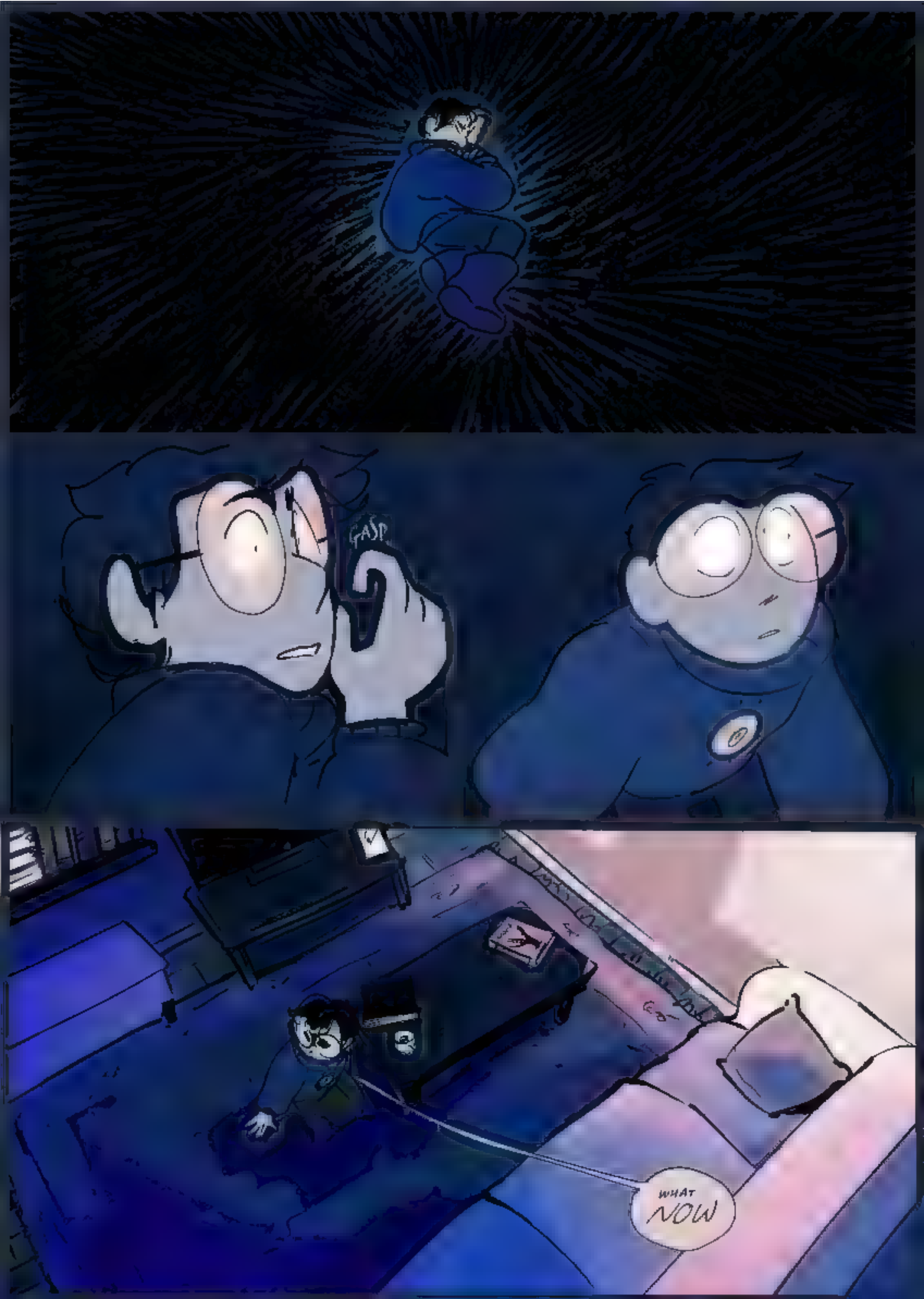
DID YOU EVER READ ANYTHING ABOUT THIS?

GASP




HUH. WEIRD

HEY SEP, I TH—


GASP
WHAT
NOW

OK- OK-
W— WHEN
YOU'RE LOST
OUT IN THE
WILD, TAKE
STOCK OF YOUR
SURROUNDINGS..

CUP

JUST-

A HOUSE.

SOMEONE'S
HUMAN
HOUSE.

NO WAY..

NO WAY

H-HELLO? RAINA'S FAMILY?!

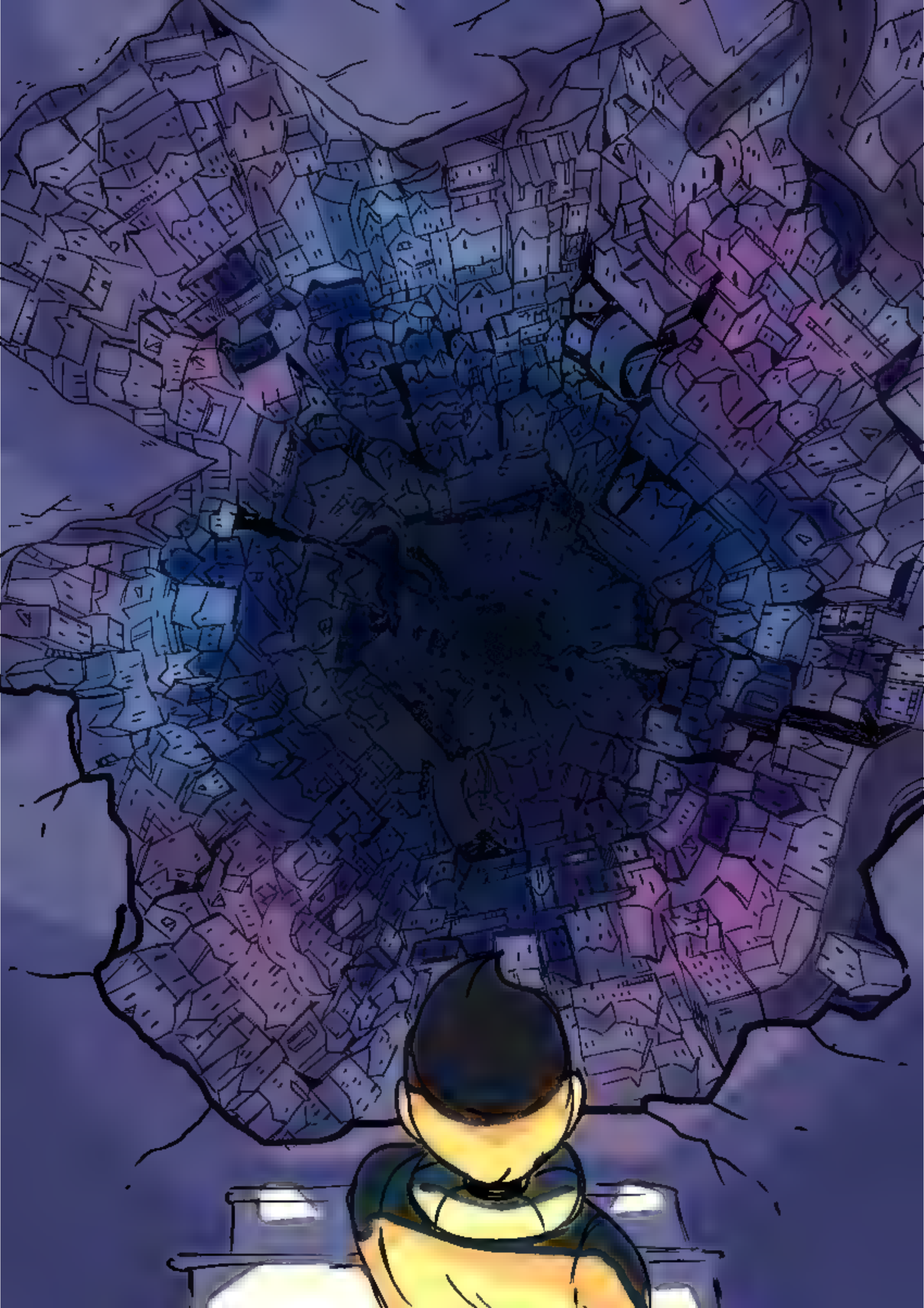
I'M RAINA'S FRIEND-

and

AND I REALLY HOPE THIS IS REAL. AND YOU'RE HERE,

BECAUSE ALL SHE WANTS IN THE WORLD IS TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

'CMON ... PLEASE...



THEY REALLY WERE HERE

UNDERNEATH EVERYTHING ...

"TAKE STOCK OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS- AND USE EVERYTHING YOU CAN TO HELP YOU SURVIVE..."

"SURVIVE UNTIL YOU CAN GET HELP"

NATURE WILL SURPRISE YOU "

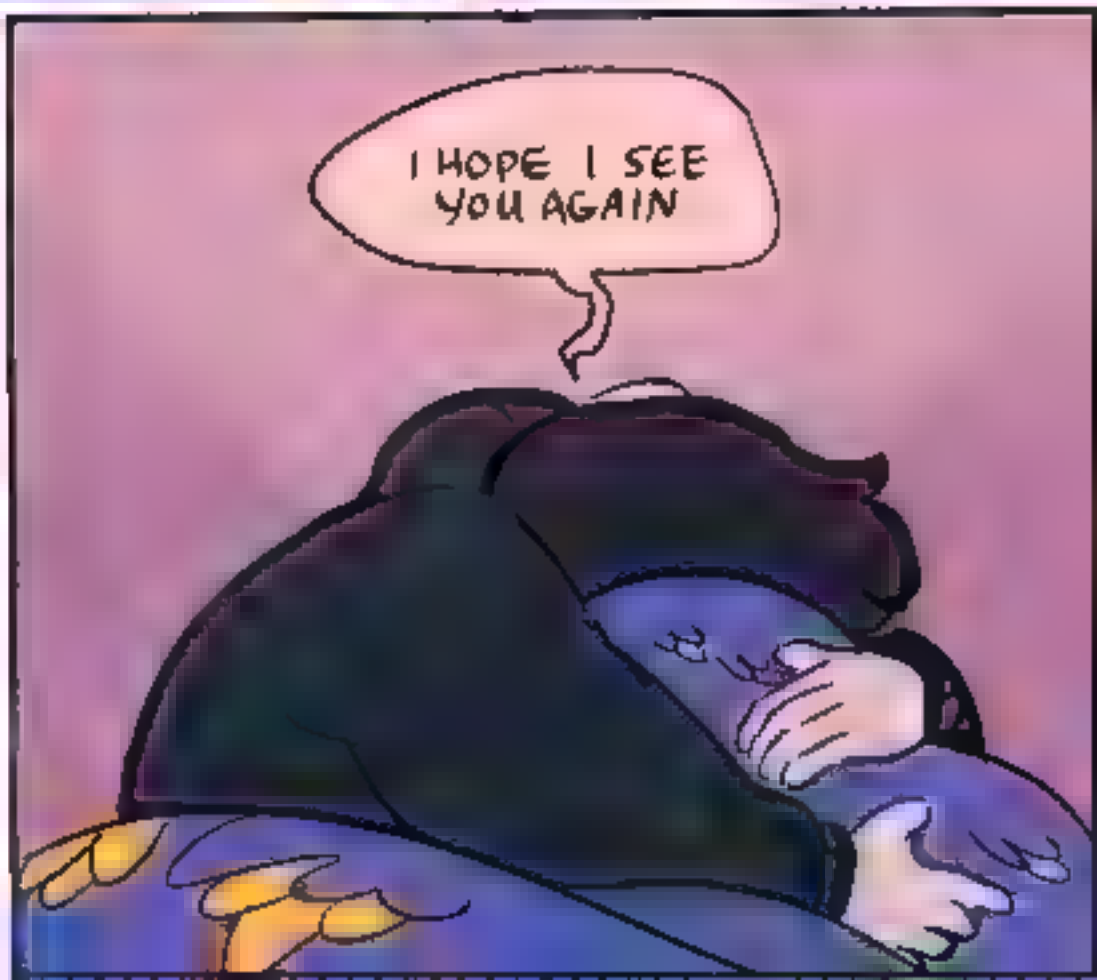
RAINA

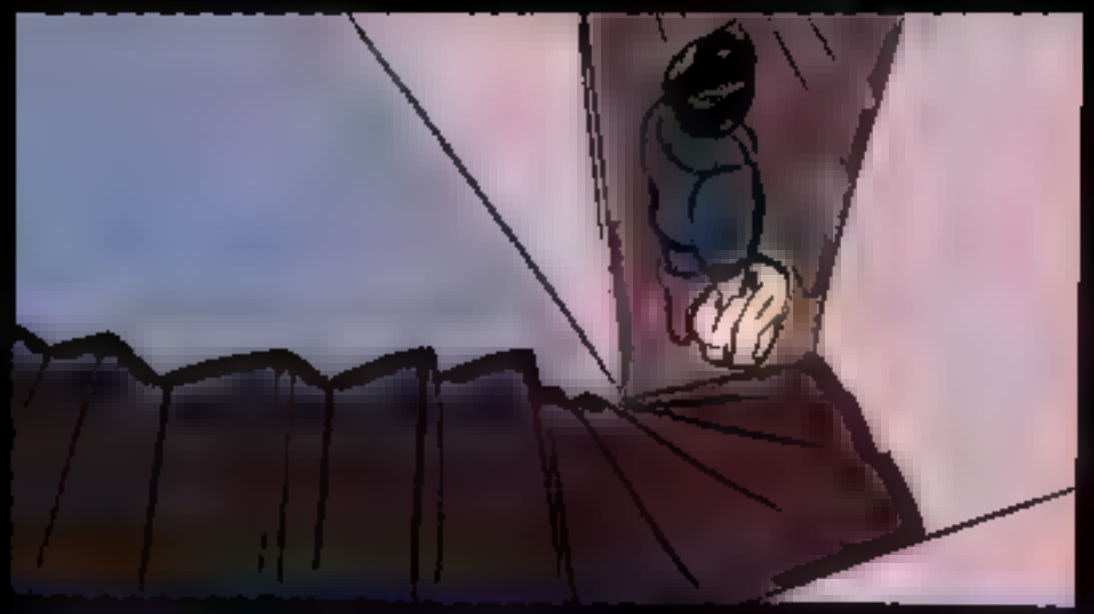
"SO BE READY."

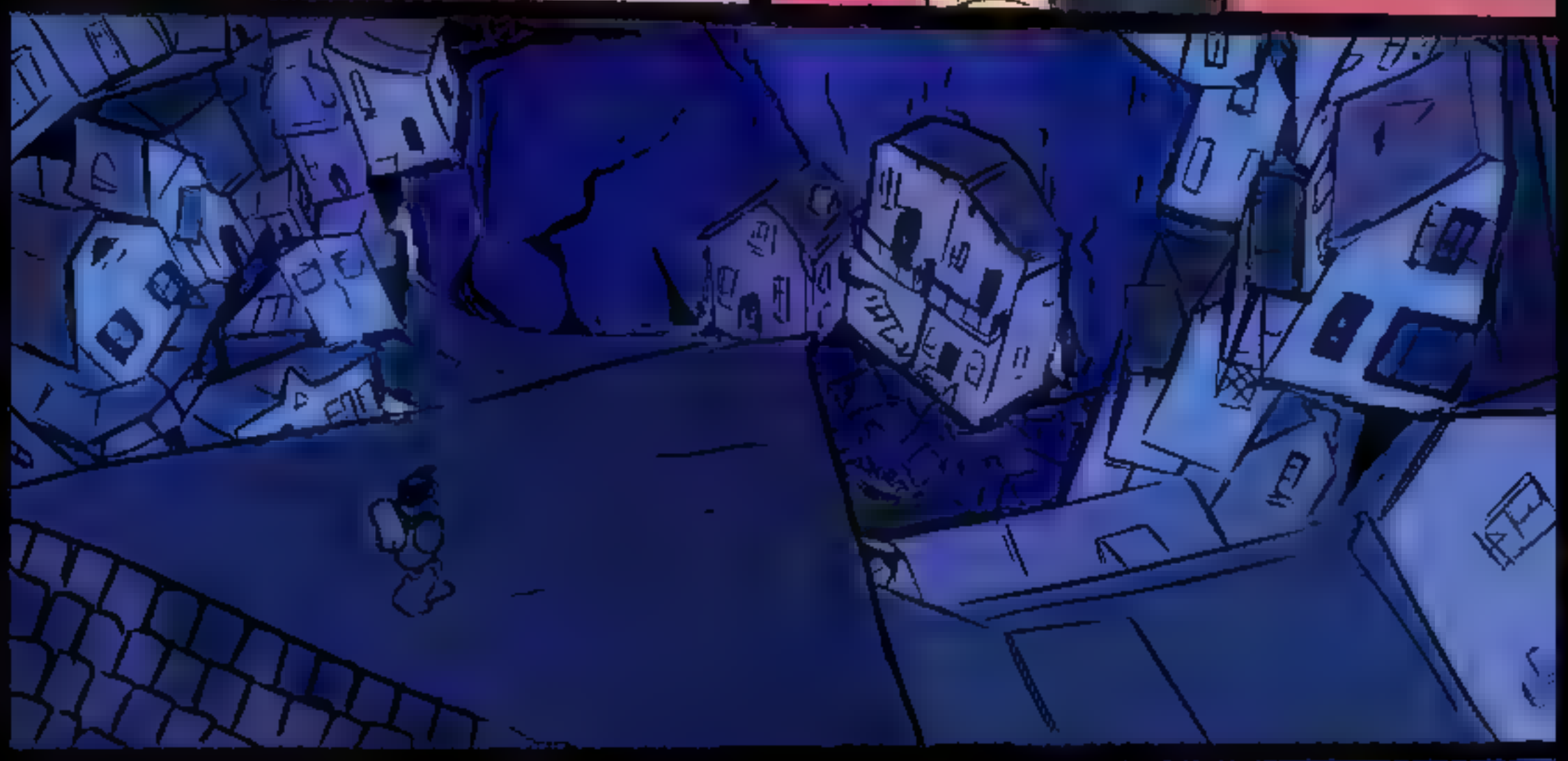
SEE YOU SOON. AT THE CENTER, LIKE WE SAID

HEH
SNICKT
COOL BLADE, NERD

HMMM
THIS IS A GOOD HOUSE. I WANNA COME OVER HERE
AFTER ALL THIS


I HOPE I SEE YOU AGAIN





OH MY GOD

GO BACK UP

NORN, CAN Y-

AUGH!

GET-

..CAN'T BE..

NO

GET BEHIND ME-

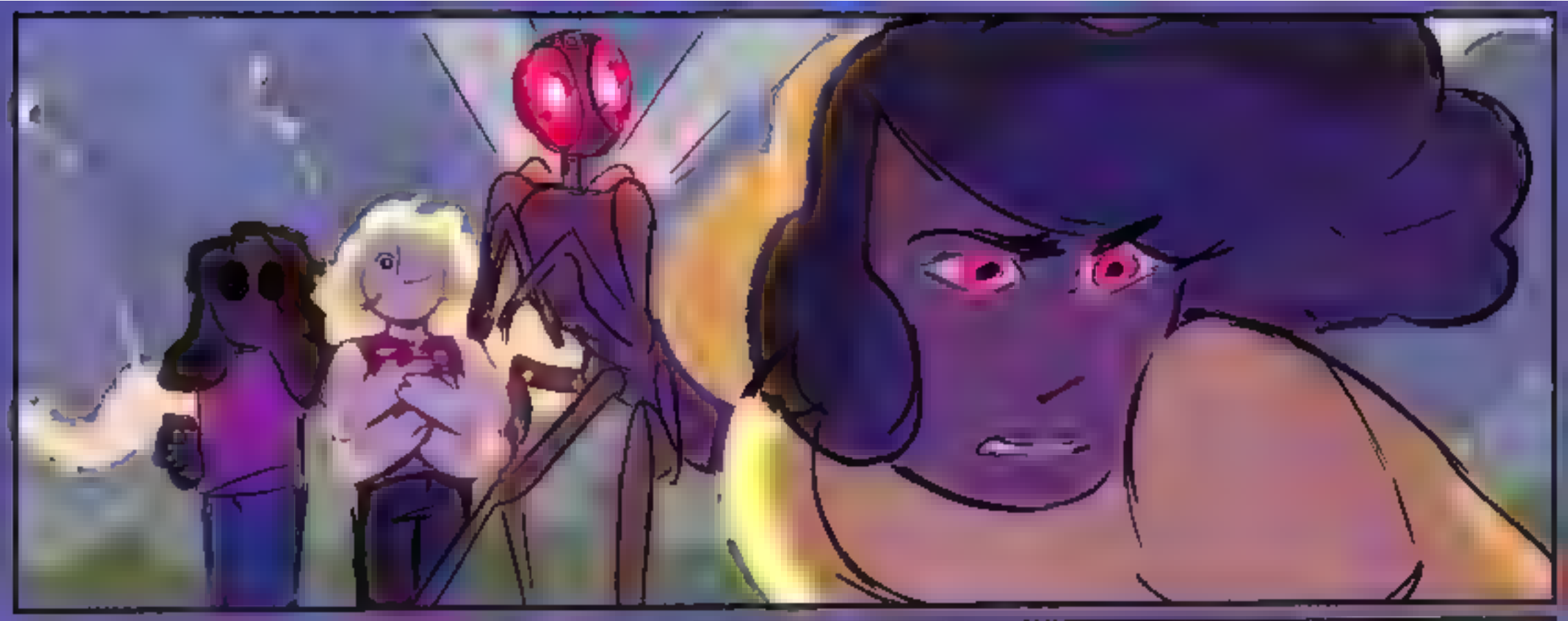
STAY BACK

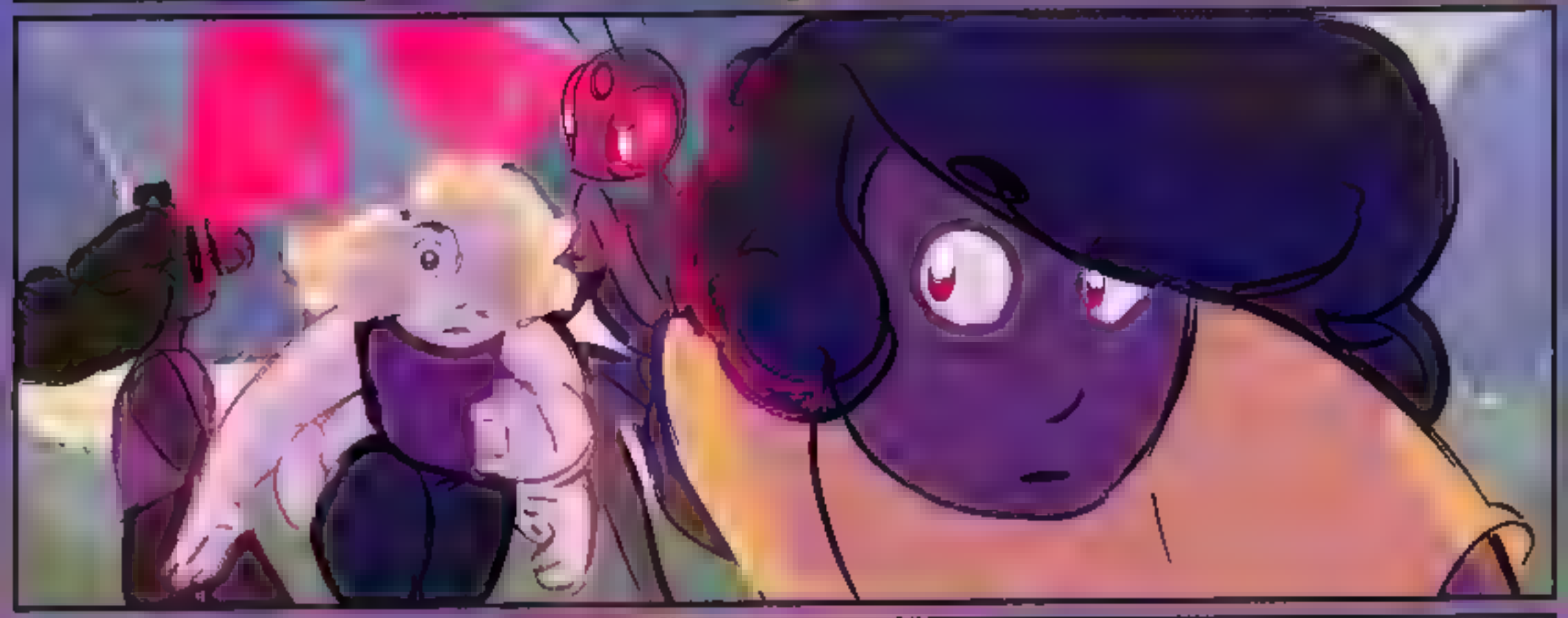
WE'LL NEVER GET DOWN THERE

THEY JUST KEEP COMING!

KATE!

BACK



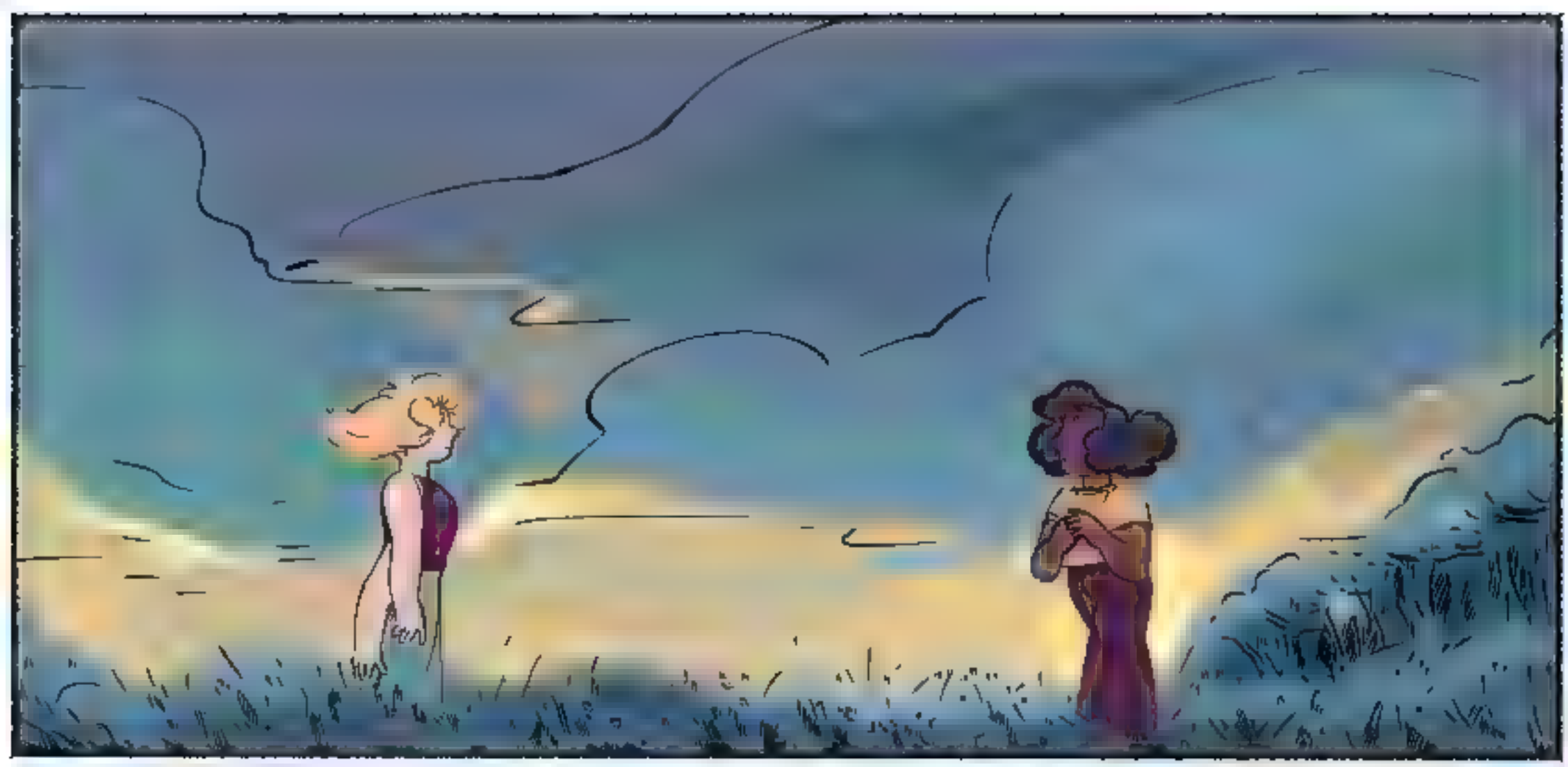


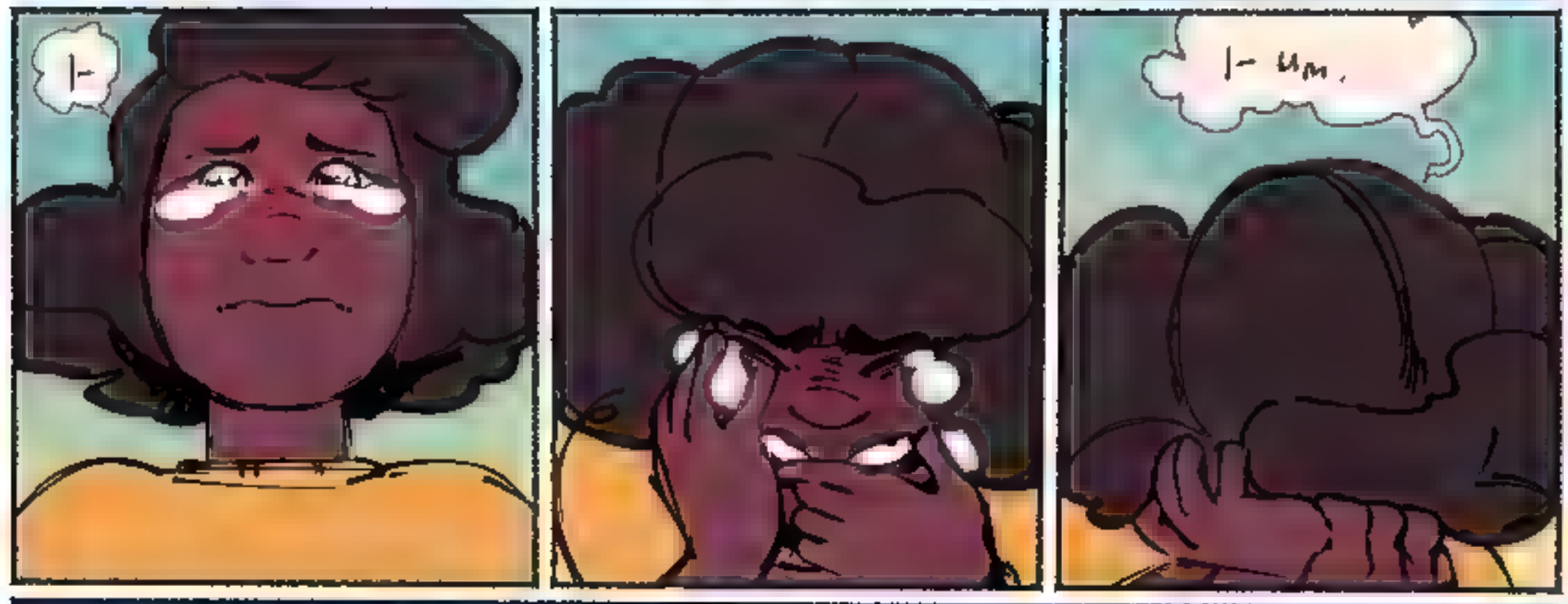
HEH HEH HEH
THWAK
WHOOSH

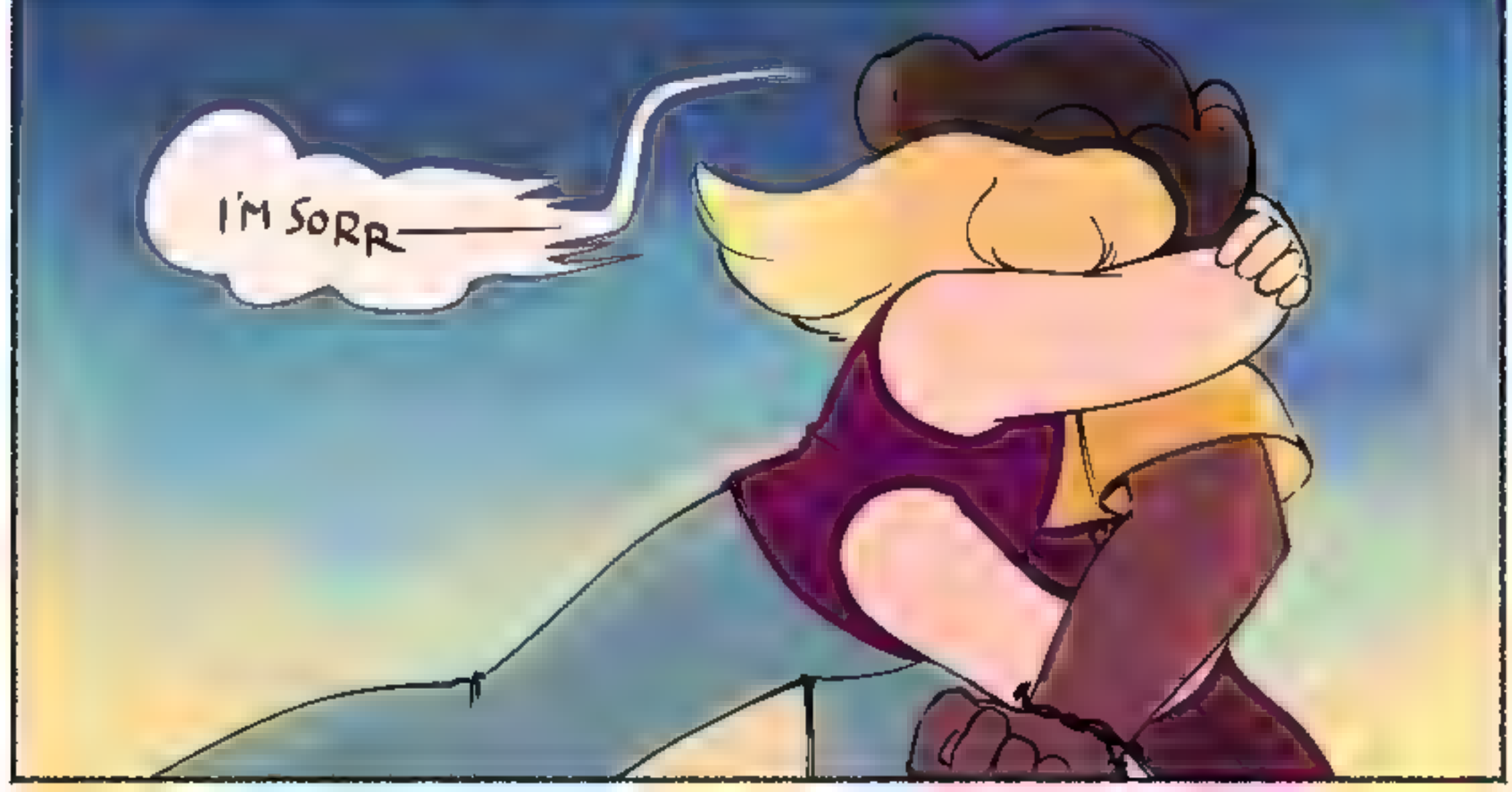
CAN YOU LIFT ME IN THE AIR WITH ONE HAND?

GRR

H.
HEY
HEY YOURSELF




I-
I- um.


I'M SORR

PLEASE DONT BE SORRY, PLEASE DONT—

I DIDNT KNOW IF I WOULD EVER FIND YOU

I MISSED YOU SO MUCH

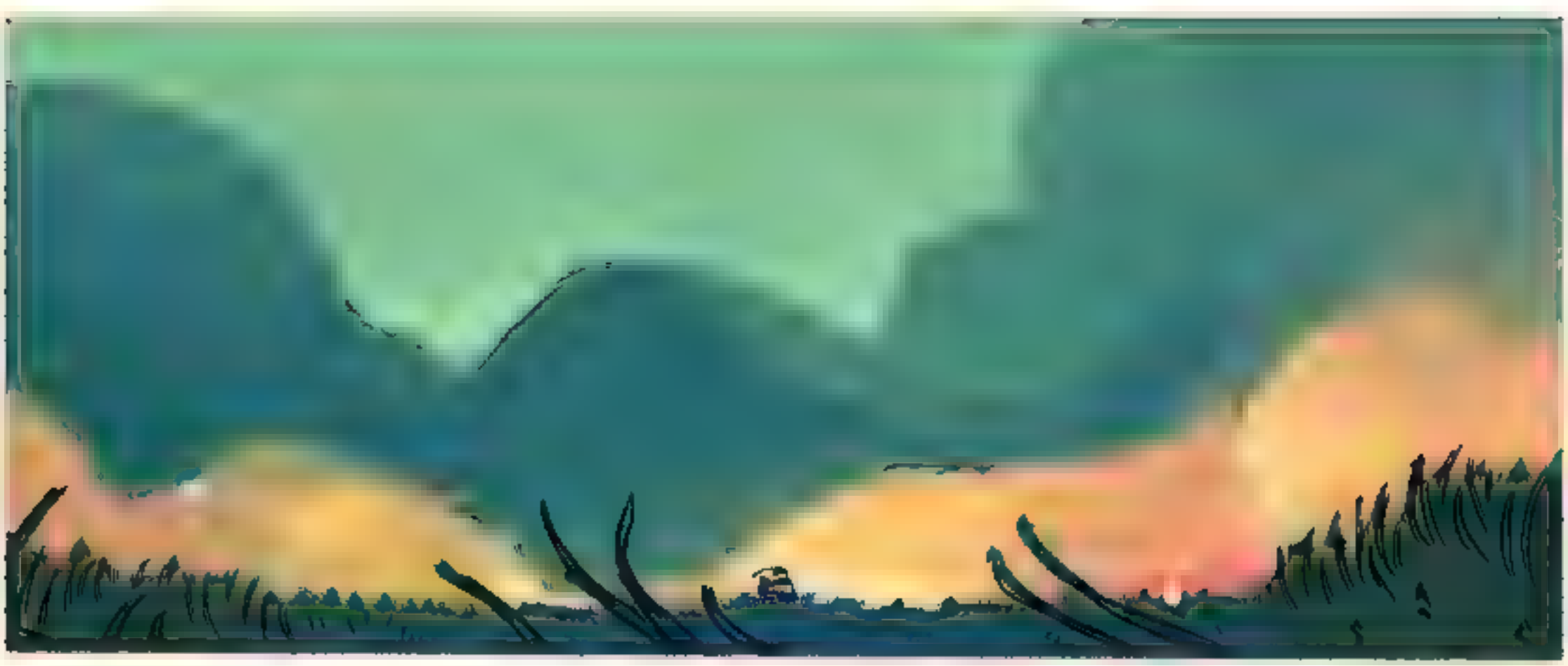
KATE...

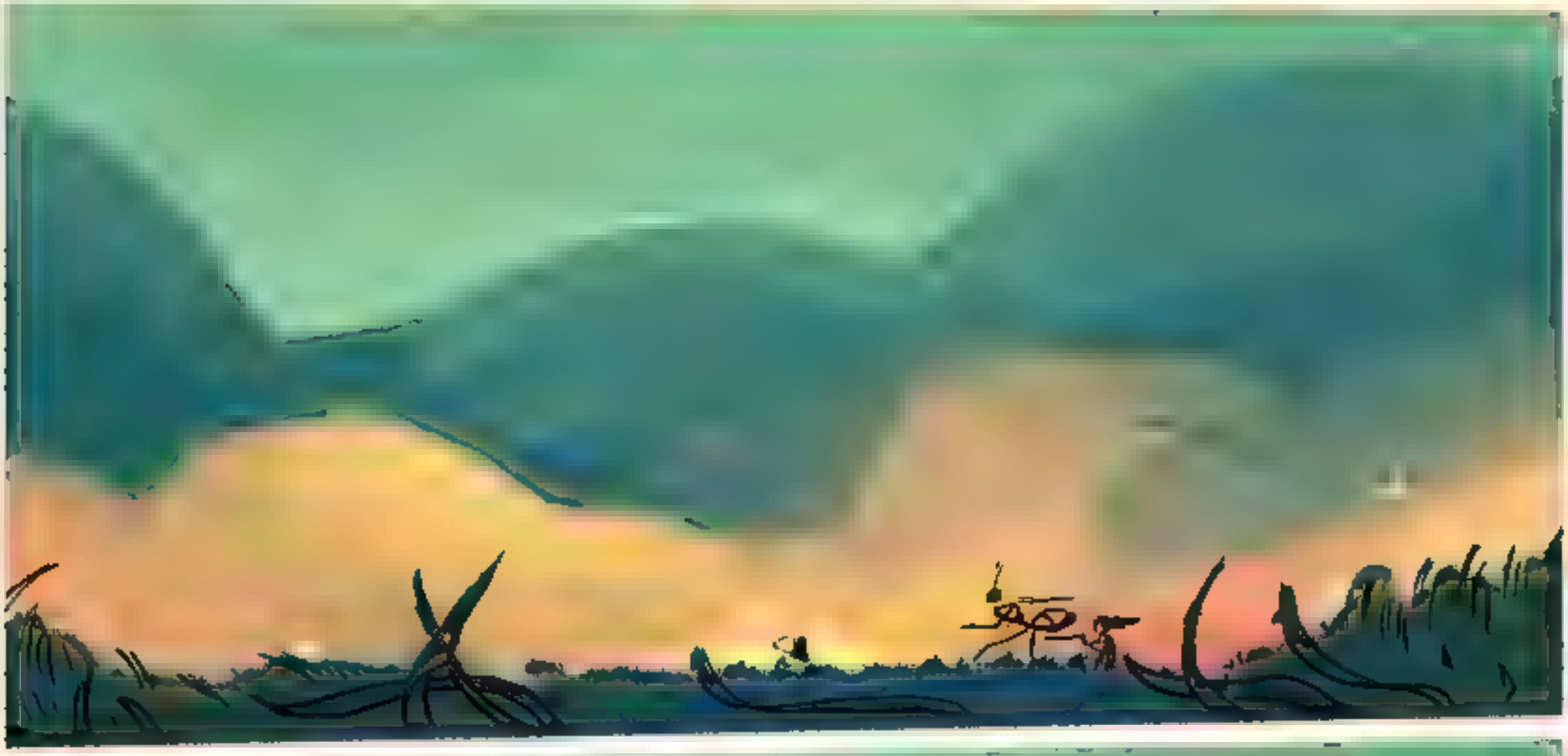
RAINA ..

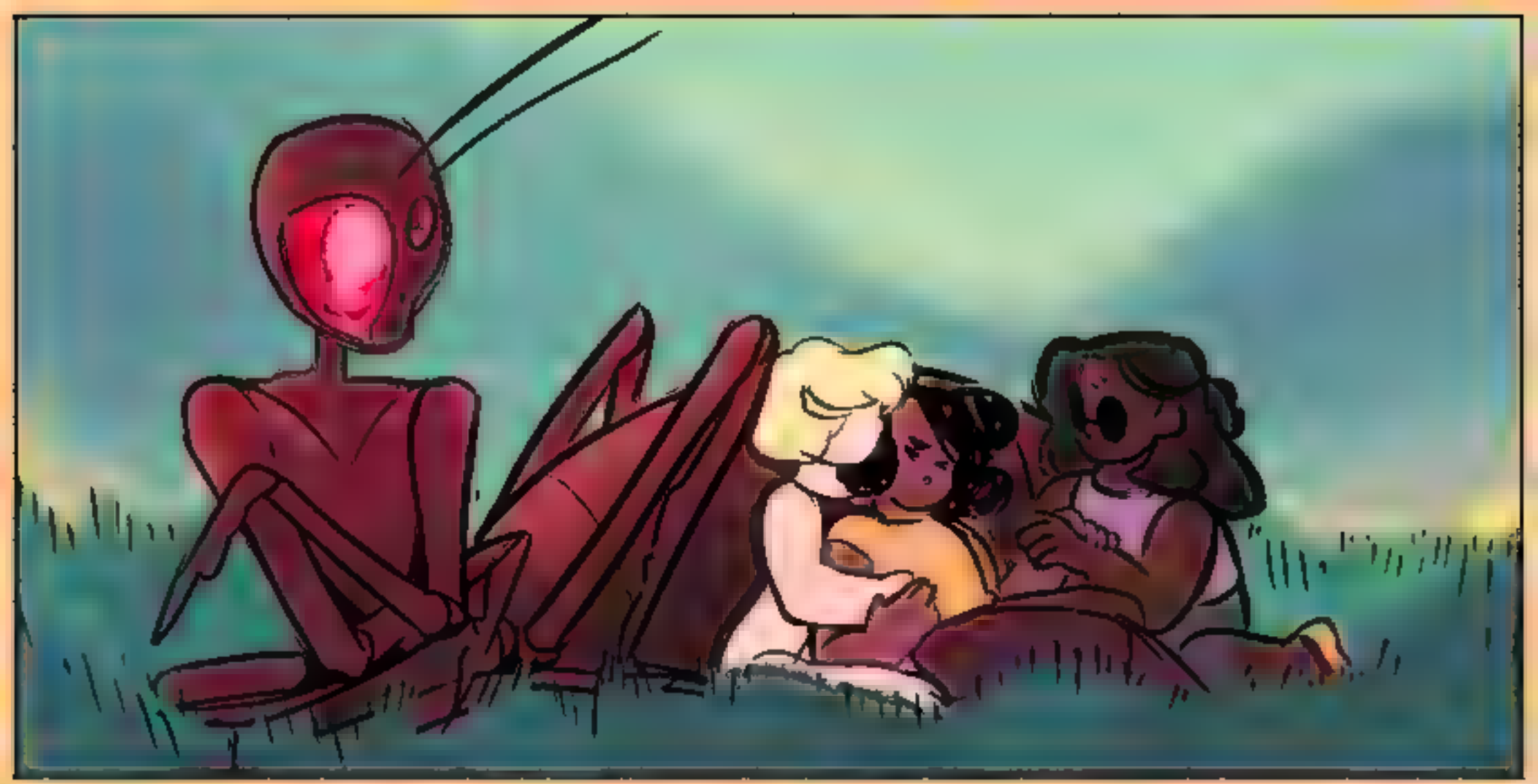
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

CAN WE STAY LIKE THIS

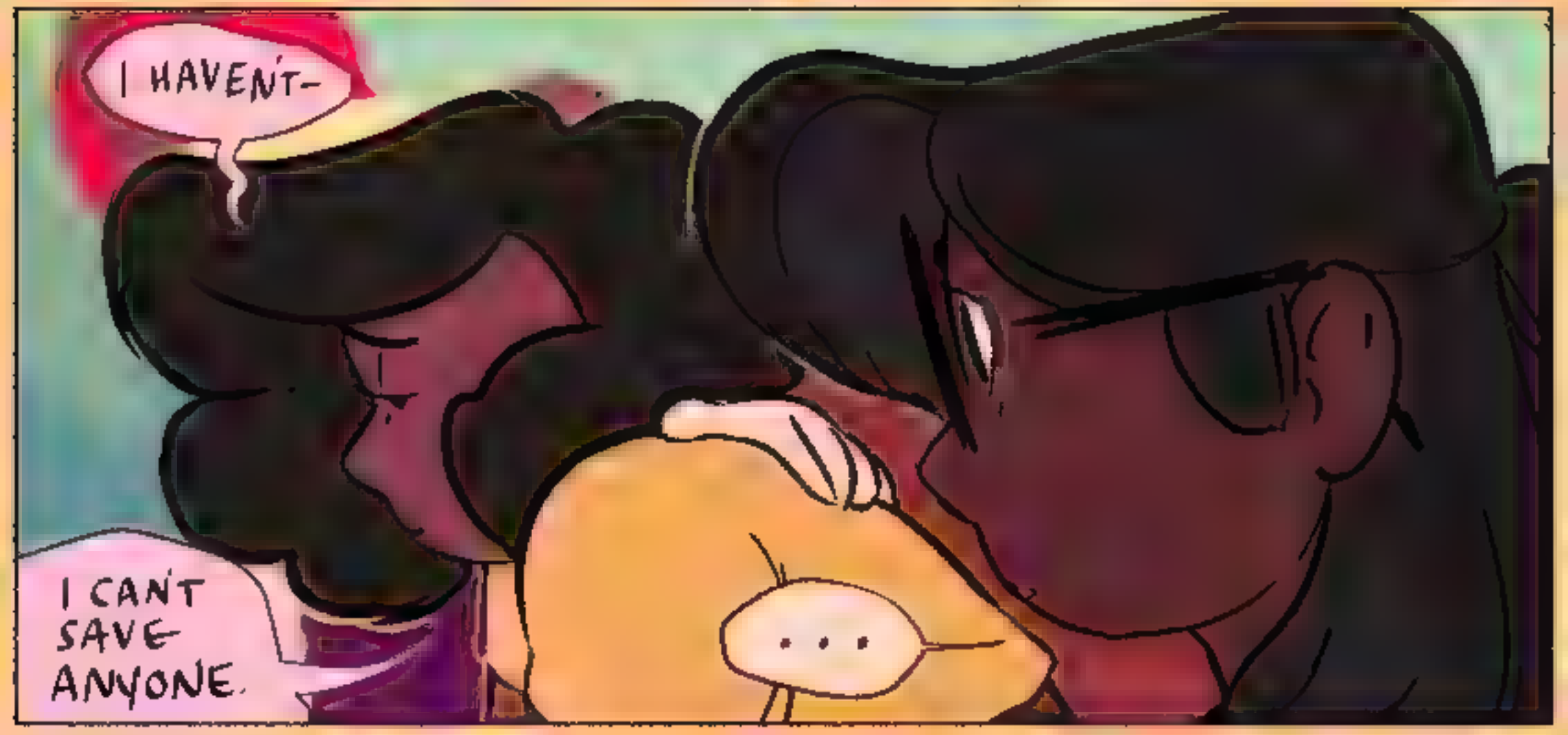
JUST FOR A MINUTE?







SO, HE-
I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING


I HAVEN'T-
I CAN'T SAVE ANYONE.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!

NO RN

NO

THIS, COMING FROM THE KID WHO JUST WALKED UP AND SAVED OUR LIVES WITHOUT EVEN THINKING?!

YOU BELIEVED YOUR PARENTS WERE ALIVE ALL THIS TIME, BUT YOU CANT BELIEVE HE'S ALIVE DOWN THERE ... ?

IF WE JUST TRY, I'M SURE -

NORN.

ENOUGH.

IT'S HER CALL WHETHER WE ALL GO OR NOT

WAIT.

YOU MEAN- YOU D COME WITH ME?

'COURSE

AND ?

YEAH, OF COURSE

BUT- WHY?' WE DONT KNOW WHAT S GONNA HAPPEN DOWN THERE . YOU DIDNT SIGN UP FOR ALL THIS—

RAINA . IM JUST SORRY IT TOOK SO LONG

I WANTED TO BE WITH YOU THE WHOLE TIME

...
...MY NOSE
I DIDN'T MEAN FOR IT TO BE YOUR NOSE

SSSORRY NOR N!!

S'OK-AY

KISS

STOP APOLOGIZING

IT'S WEIRD"

NOT MUCH FARTHER

MM-HM

SIGH

QUESTION FOR A QUESTION

YES?

SO, WHAT—

NO, I WANT TO GO FIRST

...

OK.

HMMM..

WHAT DO HUMANS DO WITH THEIR DEAD?

WE- ER- WE BURY THEM.

UNDER THE GROUND?

Y-YES

AND THEY STAY WHERE YOU PUT THEM?

yeah?

HUH

PRETTY EASY.

MMMMM

MY TURN NOW

THAT THING THAT ATTACKED US

WHAT WAS IT? YOU KNEW IT. AND IT KNEW YOU BACK

I DO KNOW IT

HIM

I KNOW HIM

YOU PROMISED TO BE CLEAR WITH ME

ITS DIFFICULT I WISH I UNDERSTOOD HOW HUMANS TALK -- I WILL TRY

I HAVE NEVER HAD TO EXPLAIN MYSELF TO ANOTHER CREATURE

GO ON

THERE IS AN EMPTINESS UNDER IT.

YES...

YOU'VE SEEN IT.

YES.

THIS WORLD IS BURIED AND RUINED.

ITS DENIZENS HUDDLE IN THE LAST

CLINGING OF THEIR MAGIC.

INTO THE DARK.

THAT'S HIS FAULT?
NO - NOT ONLY HIS FAULT, AT LEAST
HE THINKS THIS IS A SOLUTION
IT ISN'T OF COURSE
WHO COULD SAY HOW MANY WERE HARMED IN THE CITY AS WE FLED?
ALL THE SAME HE'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO GET TO ME
BECAUSE WHEN YOU PUT HIM IN THE GROUND. HE DOES NOT STAY
DESPITE MY EFFORTS.
SO. WE JUST MADE IT WORSE?
NO-
KRAK

YOU CAN'T MAKE THIS WORSE, PETAL.

HA. I DONT THINK THAT'S TRUE

. . .

YOU TOLD ME WHAT HE'S DOING

BUT NOT WHO HE IS.

GH-

HUMANS ARE IMPOSSIBLE!!

THERE'S NO DIFFERENCE

HE IS- HE'S-

THIS WORLD WAS FULL OF MAGIC, BUT HE HAS EATEN A GREAT DEAL OF IT

HE IS COLED ALL THROUGHOUT THE INSIDE OF THIS HOLLOWED-OUT WORLD BUT HIS HEAD IS HERE, IN THE FOREST'S CENTER

HE'S WAITING WAITING TO ESCAPE, WAITING TO GET HIS REVENGE ON ME-

HIS OTHER HALF
HIS COUNTERPART
HIS SISTER

...

HE'S DOWN..?

THAT'S WHERE RAINA IS HEADED—

WE DONT HAVE MUCH TIME

LET'S GO, THEN

I DIDNT INCLUDE ANYTHING IN MY NOTES BECAUSE I COULDNT FIND ANYTHING IN THE LIBRARY ON IT -

- APART FROM WHAT THE ARCHIVIST TOLD US

M JUST GLAD MY MAD GOT YOU THIS FAR

HEY ABOUT THAT, ACTUALLY-

HOW DID ESSIE GET THAT MAP? WHY WOULD SHE GIVE IT TO ME?

WHY DID SHE THINK IT WAS A CLUE?

IT COULD ONLY BE THOSE SYMBOLS, RIGHT? SO——

SOMETIME BETWEEN WHEN YOU LOST YOUR MAP AND WHEN ESSIE GOT IT, SOMEONE DREW THOSE SYMBOLS——

WOAH WAIT-

I GAVE THAT MAP TO ESSIE DIRECTLY

WE MET AGES AGO

WHAT?!

I DIDNT KNOW WHO SHE WAS AT FIRST

OH ESSIE

YQ?

ESSIE AND OUR MOTHER ARE OFTEN AT ODDS. IDEOLOGICALLY.

WHEN AN ANT BECOMES A FULL QUEEN, SHE INHERITS THE MEMORIES AND ENMESHED IDENTITIES OF EVERY QUEEN WHO CAME BEFORE HER, SO THEY HAVE KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR A LONG TIME.

HOW LONG?

THROUGH ALL THE QUEENS' LIFETIMES.

SHE WAS VISITING —

—WHEN I MET HER

I HEARD HER TALKING TO MO— UH- THE ARCHIVIST.

!

THAT'S ONLY AFTER AGES OF ME TRICKING HIM INTO AGREEMENT-
THIS IS NOT A GAME TO ME, ARCHIVIST, NOR A WHIM- ALL I DO IS WORK AND SCRATCH AND CLAW AT IT- UTTERLY ALONE, TOO, MIND..
BUT THAT MEANS NOTHING TO YOU, DOES IT? YOU'VE NEVER BEEN ALONE.
THIS IS USELESS

THEN WHAT GOOD ARE YOU?

SIT HERE AND ROT THEN,
UNTIL THE END COMES

CHAPTER

AH..!

I-I DIDN'T MEAN TO HEAR—

OH PLEASE

I DONT CARE WHAT YOU HEARD! HOW DID YOU GET HERE?

I LIVE HERE!

I MEAN I LIVE IN THE CITY WITH EVERYONE BUT—

WITH OTHER HUMANS?

WITH CELINE?

YEAH >

OH NEW

WHY. UH, WHAT DO YOU WANT—

AND WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON HERE?

BEAUTIFUL!!

DO YOU LIKE MAPS?

A MAD

OH IVE NEVER NEEDED ONE, BUT IVE BEEN COLLECTING THINGS LATELY

YOU KNOW, "PHYSICAL OBJECTS"

DO YOU COLLECT ANYTHING?

SURE. BOOKS REFERENCE MATERIALS.. I LIKE ASTROLABES.

WOW!! IMESSIE BY THE WAY,

WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

I— I'LL KEEP IT, THANKS

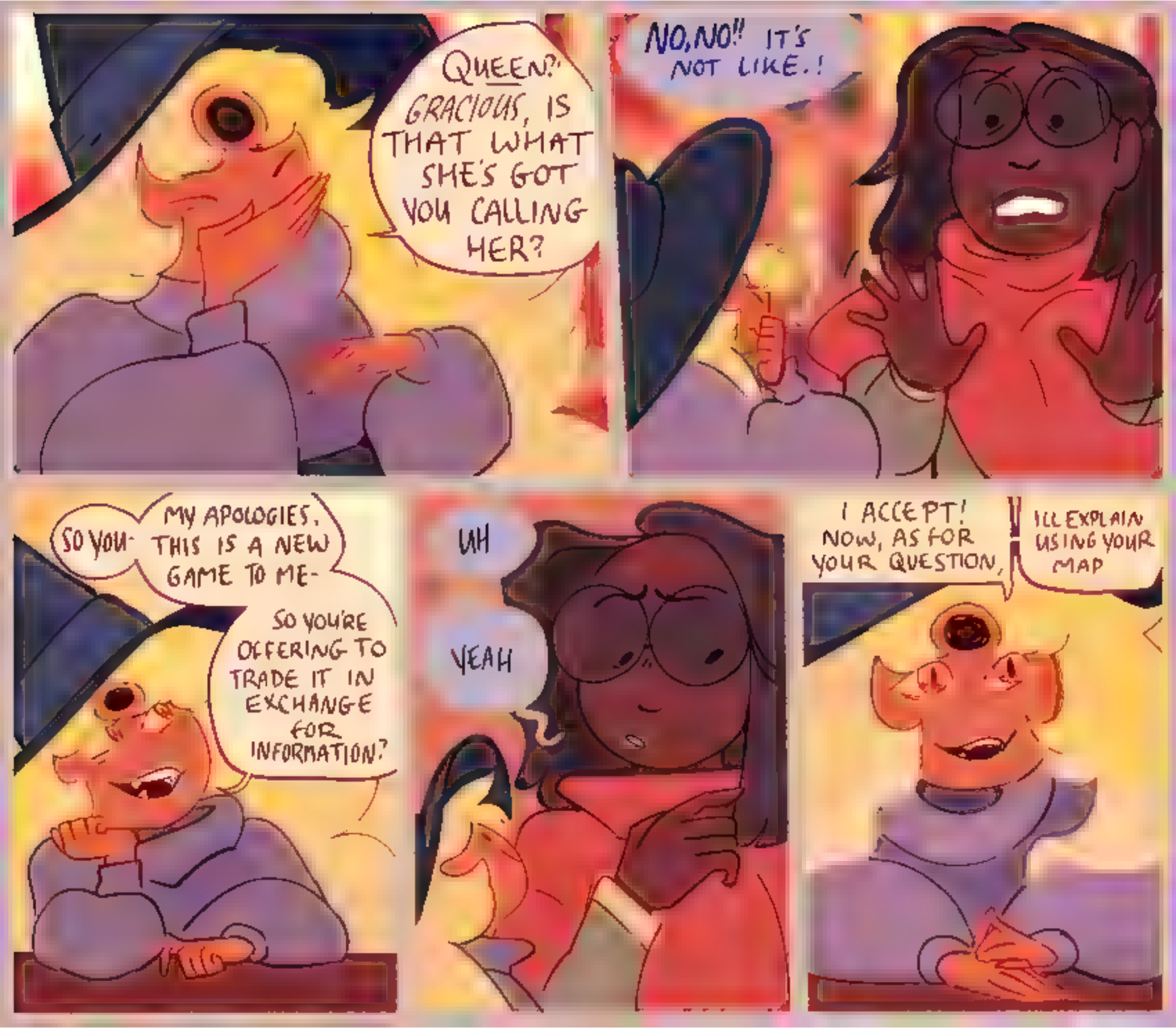
OH, OF COURSE! ONLY AN OFFER!

THANK YOU, BUT I WORKED VERY HARD TO HAVE IT

I SEE!

CHILD, MAY I HAVE A COPY OF THIS MAP?

ESSIE. WHAT WERE YOU ARGUING ABOUT IN THERE, WITH THE QUEEN?


QUEEN? GRACIOUS, IS THAT WHAT SHE'S GOT YOU CALLING HER?
NO,NO!! IT'S NOT LIKE.!
SO YOU-
MY APOLOGIES. THIS IS A NEW GAME TO ME-
SO YOU'RE OFFERING TO TRADE IT IN EXCHANGE FOR INFORMATION?
UH
YEAH
I ACCEPT! NOW, AS FOR YOUR QUESTION,
I'LL EXPLAIN USING YOUR MAP

I'M SURE THE ARCHIVIST HELPED YOU RESEARCH ALL THIS. AND PERHAPS SHE EVEN SHOWED YOU THESE?

SHE DIDN'T HIDE THEM. I DIDN'T ASK.

BUT IN THE MAKING OF THIS MAP, PERHAPS YOU NOTICED MORE ABOUT THEM.

...

IT LOOKS LIKE A BROKEN PLATE

THE CRACKS LOOK LIKE GLASS- NOT LIKE MAPS FROM WHERE IM FROM—

AND SOME THINGS THE BOOKS TALK ABOUT—I ASKED YOUNG QUEENS TO MAKE NOTES OF THEIR POSITIONS AS THEY FLY-

AND THEN THEY COME BACK AND TELL ME IT TUMBLED AWAY INTO A CRACK, THERE'S NOTHING THERE. SHAPES IN THE LAND JUT UP LIKE THERES SOMETHING UNDERNEATH..

I SURE PICKED A WORLD TO FLEE TO, HUH? THE WHOLE THING'S COMING APART IS THAT WHAT YOU MEAN?

... YES.

YOU UNDERSTAND A LOT.

I LIVE HERE!

BELIEVE THAT.

SO-THAT'S WHAT YOU WERE ARGUING ABOUT?

YES- ITS THAT SHE WANT HELP ME REPAIR THE DAMAGE

DON'T THINK CONSIDERING EVERYTHING, THAT I AM ASKING FOR SO MUCH

DON'T THINK SHE WANTS TO UNDERSTAND THE ARTS ARE SET IN THEIR WAYS

THE QUEEN HAS AND HAVE BEEN CLOSE BUT IT SEEMS NOT CLOSE ENOUGH NOT THAT THAT MATTERS IN THE SO MUCH AT STAKE

AH BUT WHILE IT LASTED - ANYWAY AM ACTING ALONE NOW

NOT THAT THAT MATTERS. NEITHER OF US ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE WORLD

BUT CAN'T MAKE HER SEE THAT

YOU CAN HAVE IT

HERE ITS A COPY ANYHOW

BUT LET ME BE CLEAR IF I AM ANYONE'S I AM THE ARCHIVISTS

SO

GOOD LUCK ESSIE

YOU TOO HUMAN

O-OH OKAY

BYE.

RAINA, SHE MARKED IT UP HERSELF. NOW, I CAN'T SAY WHY. OR WHY SHE CHOSE NOT TO TELL YOU, BUT..

WELL. ITS HARD TO KNOW WITH DENIZENS, AND SHE'S WEIRDER THAN MOST.

DO YOU TRUST THAT SHE'S TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT YOUR PARENTS?

I—

I DON'T KNOW

AND IF THEY'RE REALLY THERE, THEN WE'LL HAVE TO FIGURE OUT HOW WE'RE GOING TO GET EVERYONE HOME.. ESSIE, DO YOU THINK THERE'S A WAY WE COULD MAKE A- A ENGLISH A DIRIGEABLE?

AH, UGH- A COGNATE

THAT'S SILLY ANYWAY.. MM- WE SHOULD HAVE PLANNED AHEAD

IF I WANT TO CARE FOR ANY CHILD WHO MIGHT COME, THEN I HAVE TO BE LIKE AN ADULT, I AM THE OLDEST, SO AND I TOOK CARE OF KATE.

AND

WE WILL FIND A WAY TOGETHER, ESSIE..

I DON'T KNOW IF I KNOW EEEE

CLOSE

WHAT? PLEASE LAND

UH- OK- BUT-

NOW, PLEASE

QUICKLY!!

OK, OK!

WHEW· DONT DO THAT SO SUDDENLY IN THE WOODS– IT COULD START A FIRE—

HUFF HUFF

ESSIE ?

?

WHAT S WRONG WITH YOU ?

THROUGH THOSE TREES, YOU WILL FIND YOUR SISTER

AND RAINA, AND THEIR COMPANIONS

THEY ARE ALL JUST AHEAD

H- HOW DO YOU

WHAT'S WRONG.

I CANT-

I CANT SEE HER. NOT NOW-

WHAT.

I HAVE TO LEAVE

SHE'S SAFE WITH YOU FOR NOW BUT I HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF SOMETHING--

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?! HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET HOME THEN?!

CALL ON THE ARCHIVIST SHE HAS NO LOVE FOR ME. BUT SHE LOVES YOUR FAMILY

CELINE, I'LL BE BACK SOON, I SWEAR.

BUT I MUST ACT IMMEDIATELY, I AM NOT ABANDONING YOU, I SWEAR-

STOP

PLEASE DONT HATE ME SUDDENLY I CANT BEAR YOU HATING ME EVEN THOUGH I COULD BEFORE

DOES RAINA HATE ME, DO YOU THINK?

JUST

TELL ME WHAT YOU'RE LEAVING TO DO.

I NEED TO TALK TO MY BROTHER

ESSIE YOU CAN'T—

UGH

THUD

RIGHT

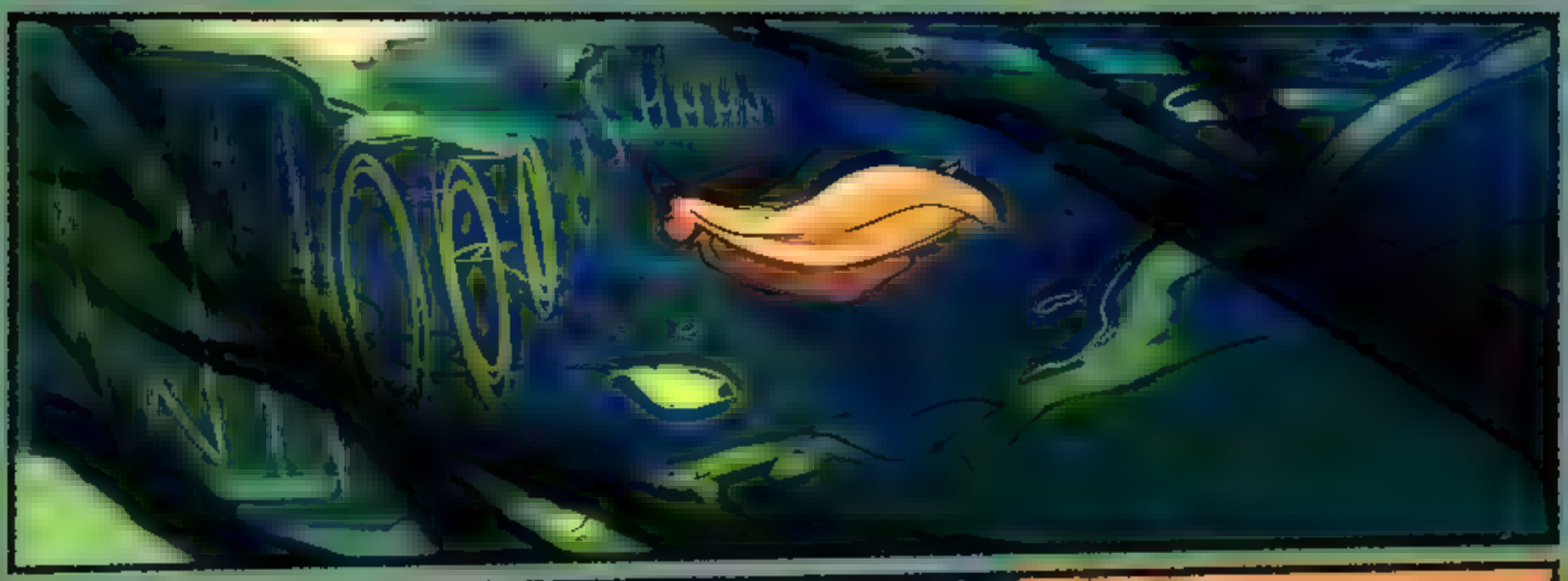
"DON'T HATE ME." YOU MAKE IT **DIFFICULT.**

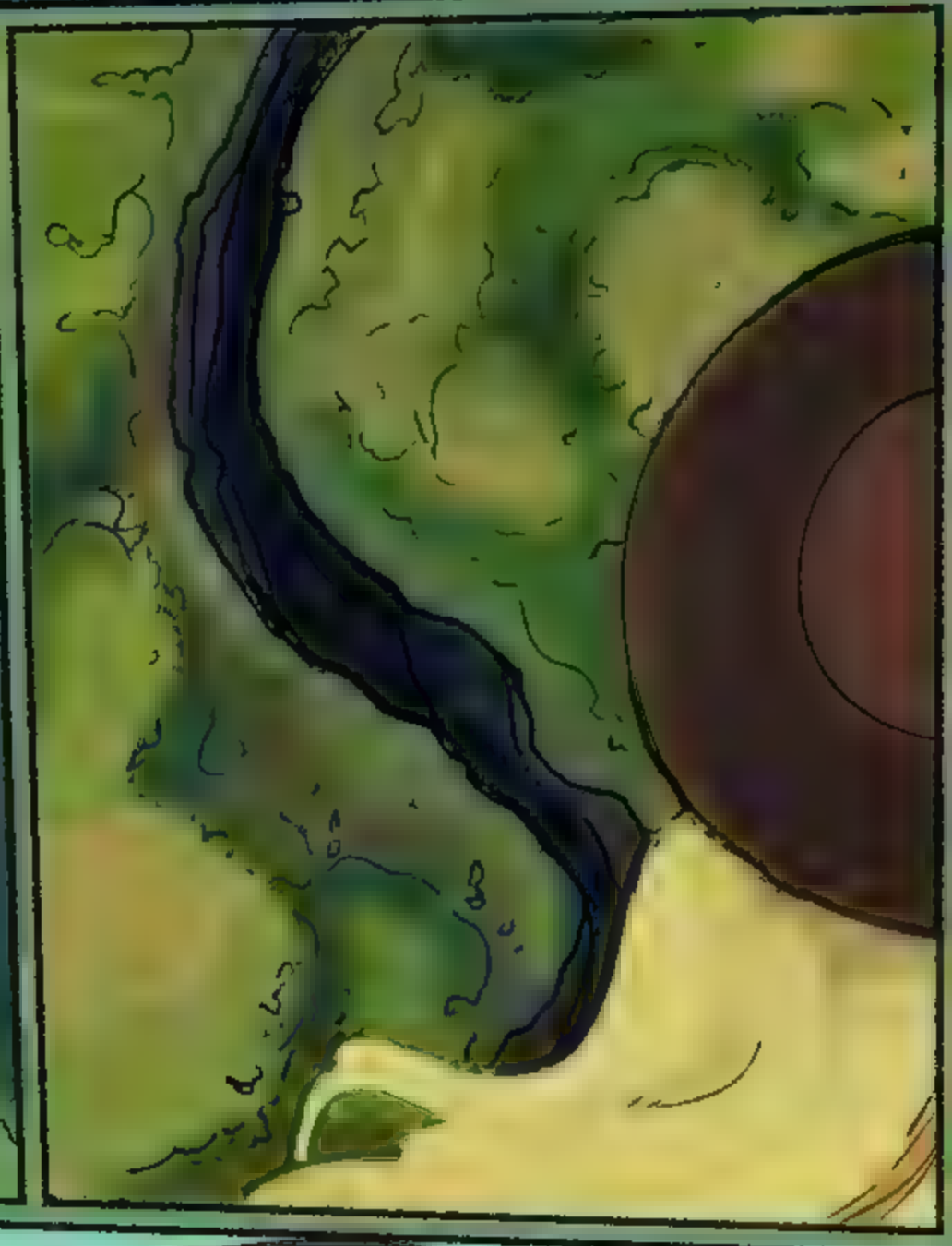
SIGH
I HOPE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING

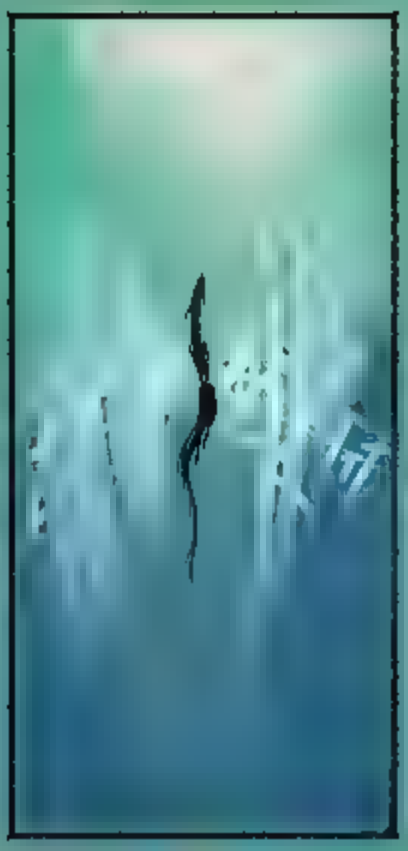
ESSIE

JUST THROUGH HERE. HUH?

I HOPE IT'S NOT SO EASY TO BE RID OF YOU..
PLEASE
BE THERE





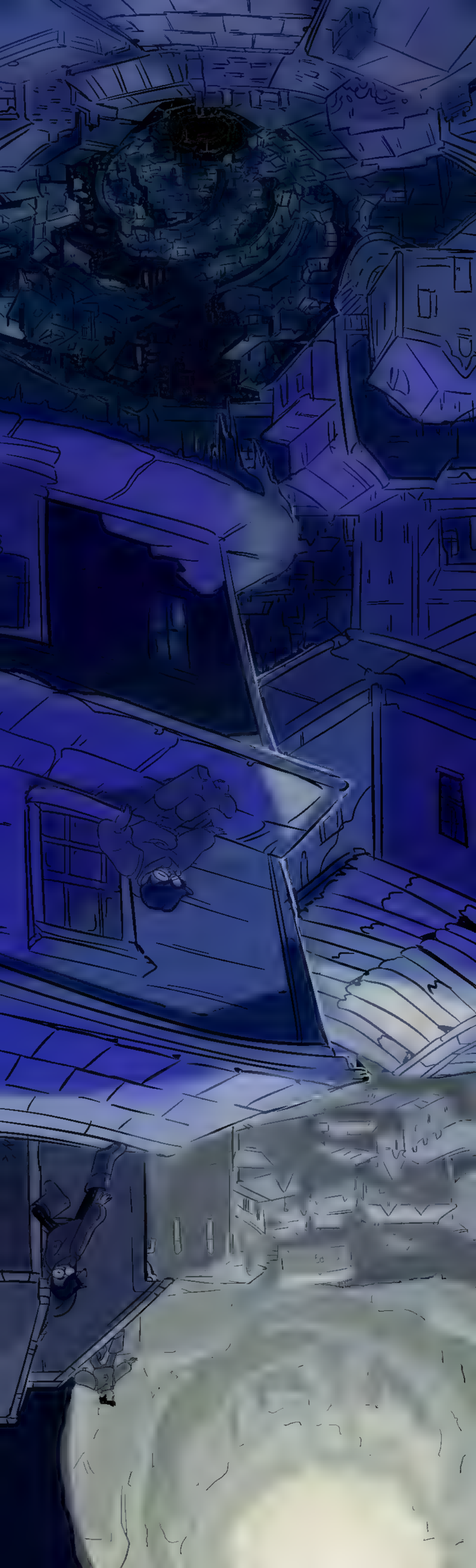


HA
YOU
ME.
ARE YOU LIMBS SMART ENOUGH TO TAKE A MESSAGE DOWN TO THE ACTUAL BRAIN?!

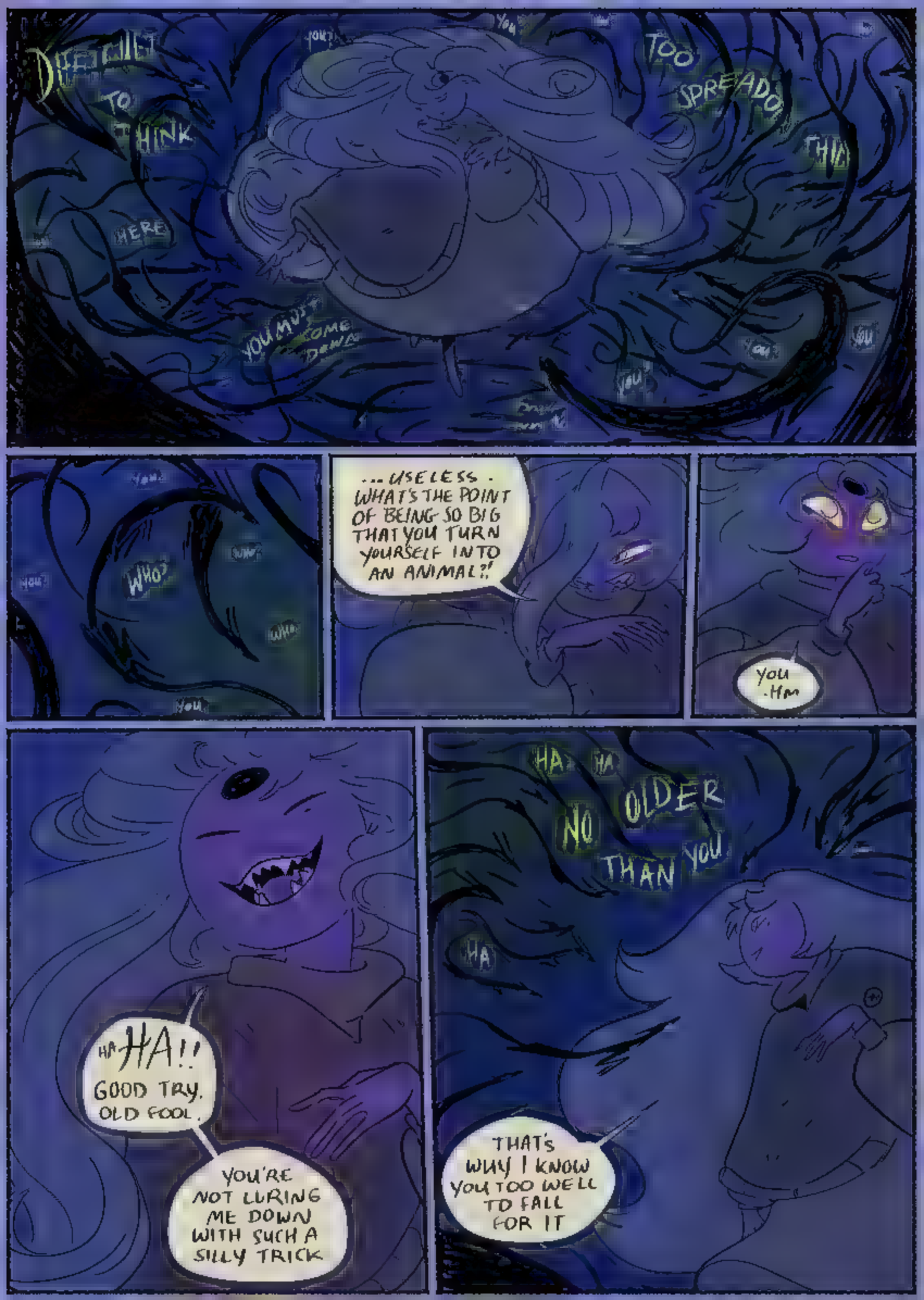
FLY DOWN UNTIL THE PART THAT THINKS CATCHES YOU. TELL HIM- TELL YOU- I'M WILLING TO BARGAIN

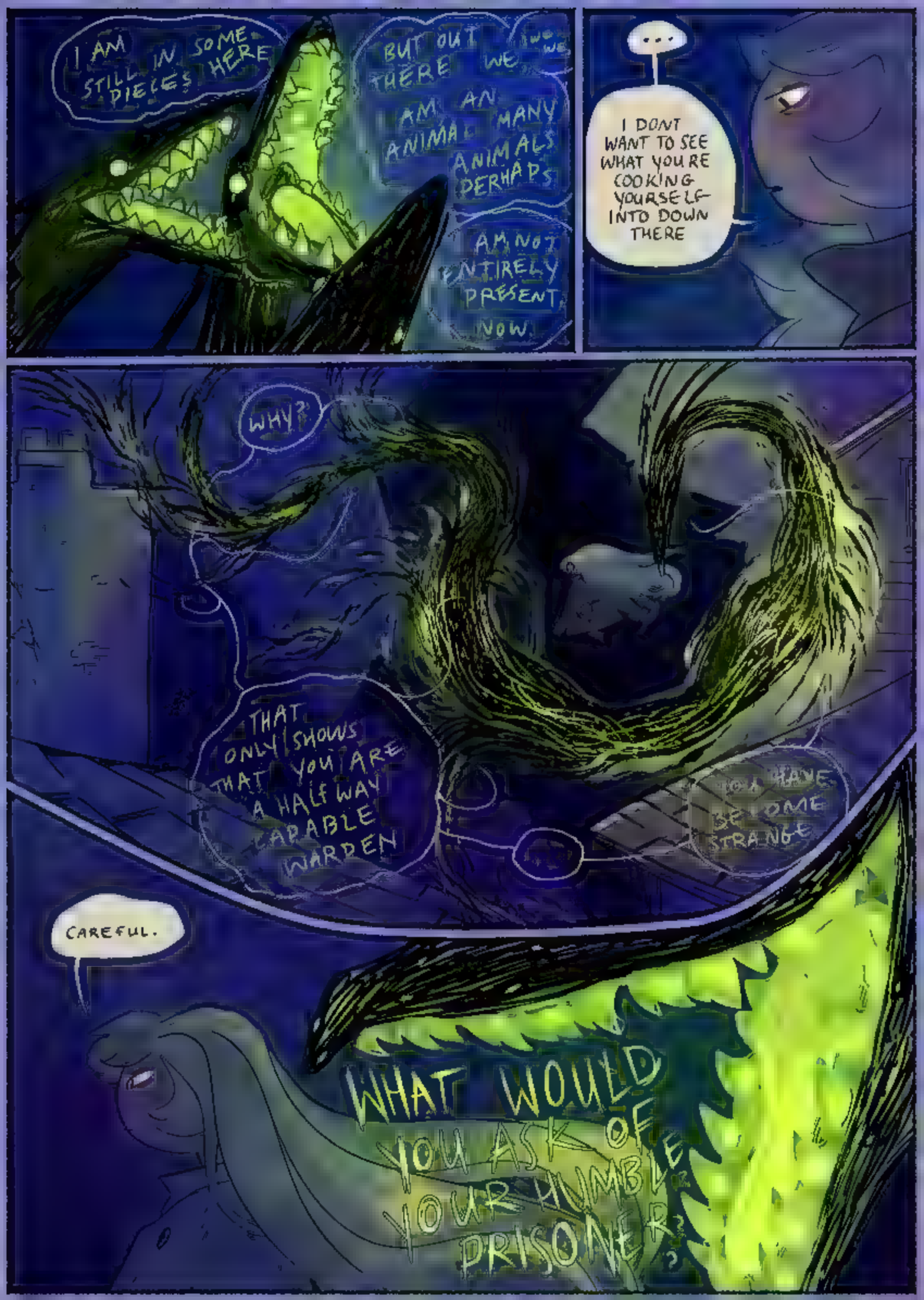
WE - I I-I-I- WE CANT TALK UP HERE. ERE ERE
COME
COME
COME DOWN
COME DOWN
COME DOWN
COME DOWN

DOWN



YEESH
I'M AWAKE I'M AWAKE
WHOA
GASP
OH GOD
I'M NOT GOING ANY DEEPER
JUST TALK TO ME HERE
I'M STOPPING
NO WAY


DIFFICULT TO THINK
HERE
YOU MUST COME DOWN
TOO SPREAD
YOU
WHO?
...USELESS. WHAT'S THE POINT OF BEING SO BIG THAT YOU TURN YOURSELF INTO AN ANIMAL?!
YOU. HM
HA HA!! GOOD TRY, OLD FOOL.
YOU'RE NOT LURING ME DOWN WITH SUCH A SILLY TRICK
HA HA NO OLDER THAN YOU
THAT'S WHY I KNOW YOU TOO WELL TO FALL FOR IT


I AM STILL IN SOME PIECES HERE
BUT OUT THERE WE AM AN ANIMAL MANY ANIMALS PERHAPS
AM NOT ENTIRELY PRESENT NOW.
I DONT WANT TO SEE WHAT YOU'RE COOKING YOURSELF INTO DOWN THERE
WHY?
THAT ONLY SHOWS THAT YOU ARE A HALF WAY CAPABLE WARDEN
CAREFUL.
WHAT WOULD YOU ASK OF YOUR HUMBLE PRISONER?

THINGS HAVE CHANGED.
YOU ARE SURRENDERING!
NO
THERE HAS TO BE ANOTHER WAY- THEY'RE NOT SUITED- I-
I WONT DO THIS.
KEKEHE HEEE!
THEY HAVE CONFUSED YOU. WEAKENED YOU.
UNDERGROUND WITH ME, YOU ARE THE ANIMAL.
OH. SO YOU WANT AN ANIMAL FOR YOUR WARDEN, THEN?! BUT NATURE IS CRUEL.

YOU CAN SCARCELY CONTAIN ME. YOU SLIP. YOU MAKE MISTAKES
I WILL HAVE MY DUE OR I WILL HOIST MYSELF UP AGAIN. AND THOSE THAT SCURRY OVERHEAD WILL FALL
KEEP YOUR WORD
OH, I WILL. I WILL KEEP YOU DOWN HERE UNTIL THE END-
-UNTIL THE END OF THE WORLD?

WE COULD BE THE LAST TWO CREATURES LEFT ALIVE

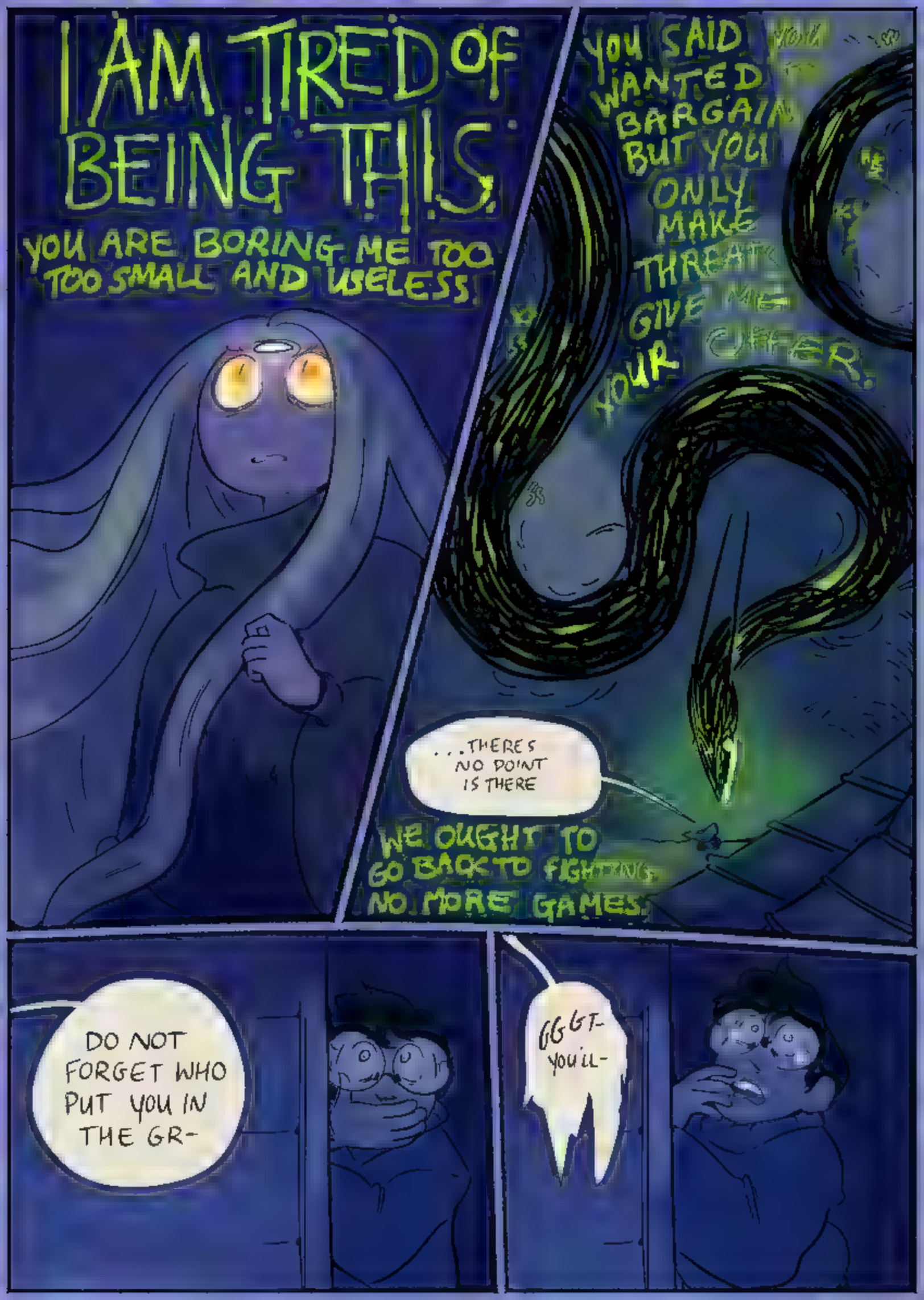
BUT ALTHOUGH YOU DID NOT WANT THAT

I WILL FIND BETTER CANDIDATES.

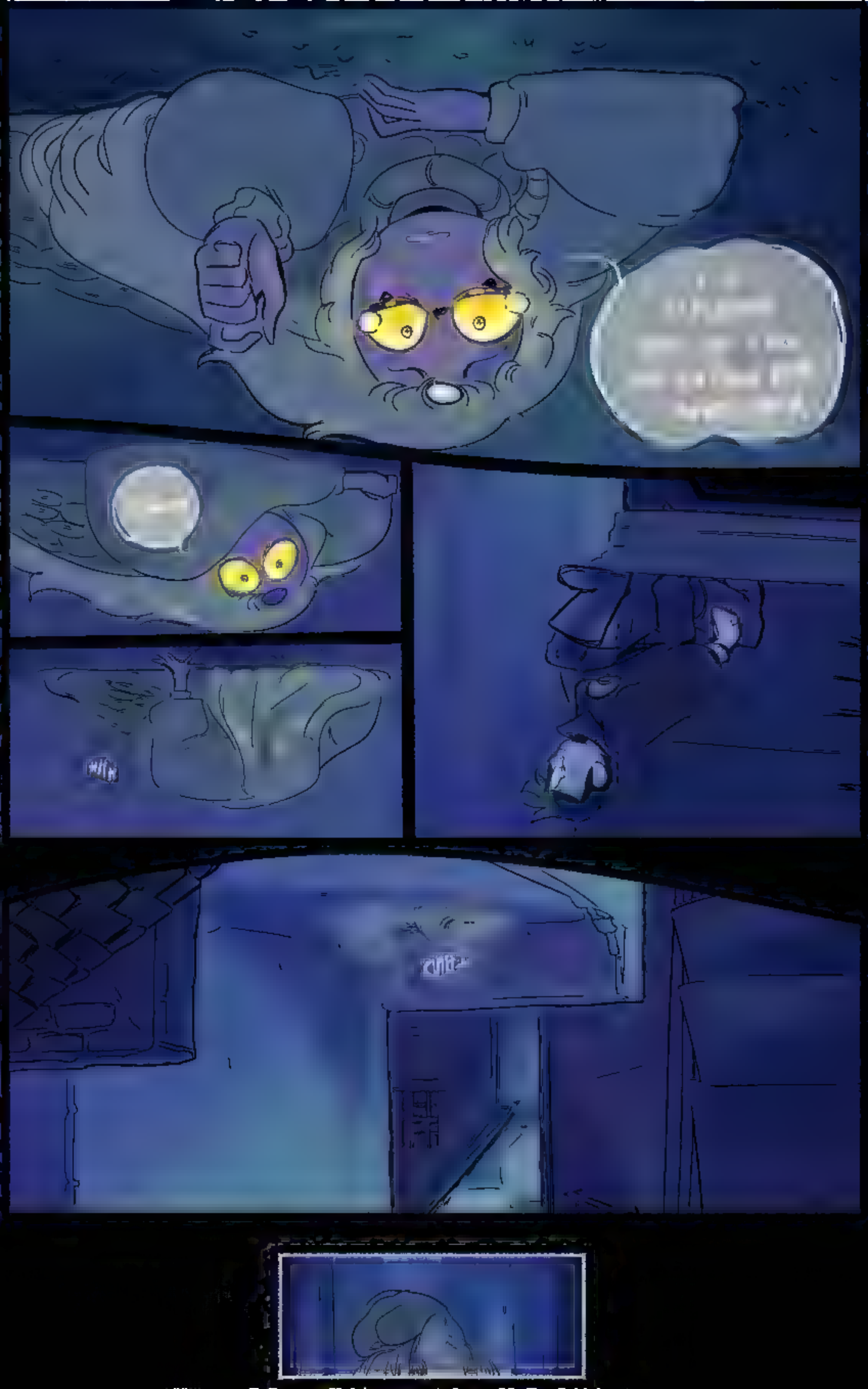
NOT THESE ONES

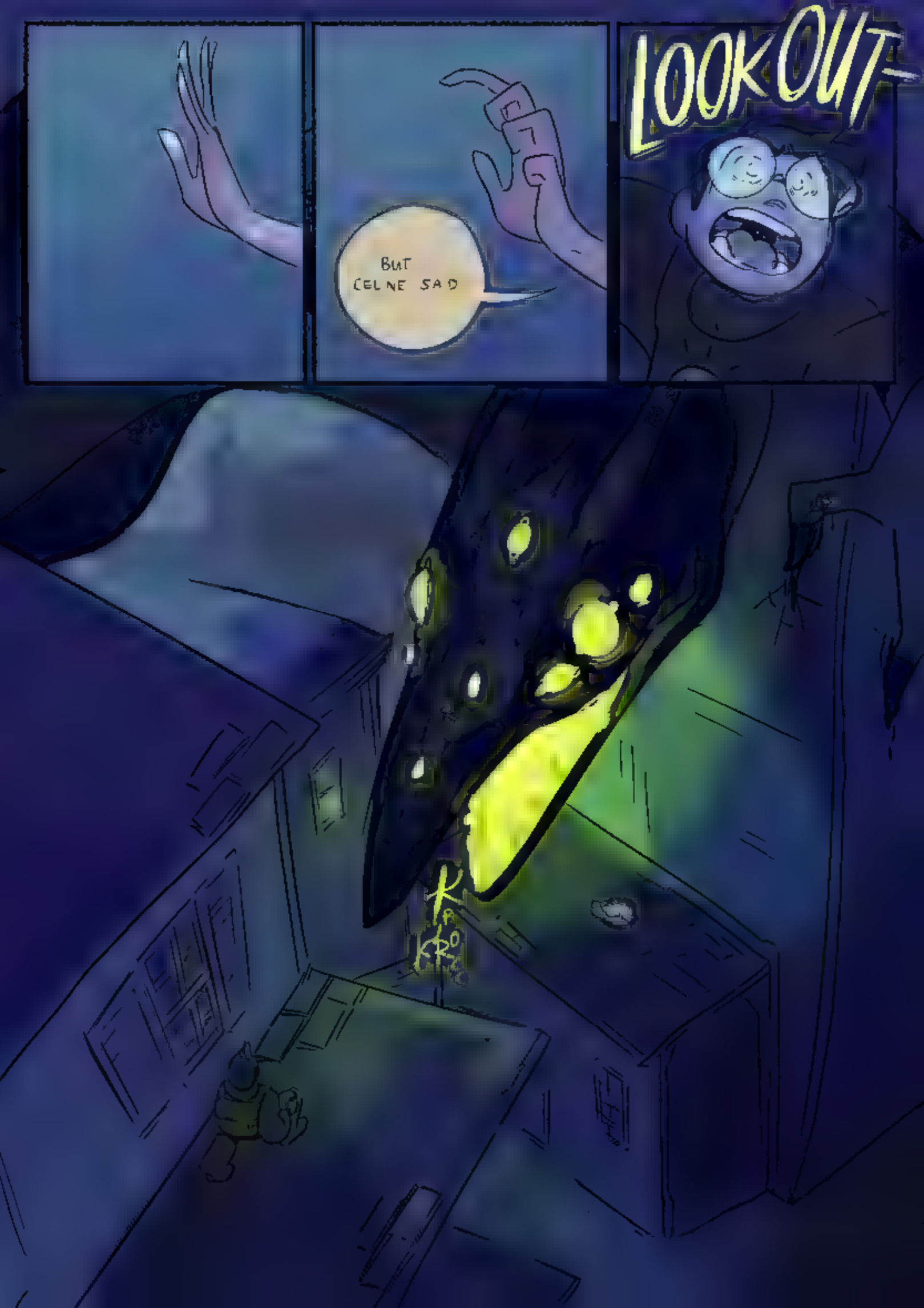
YOU DONT UNDERSTAND,

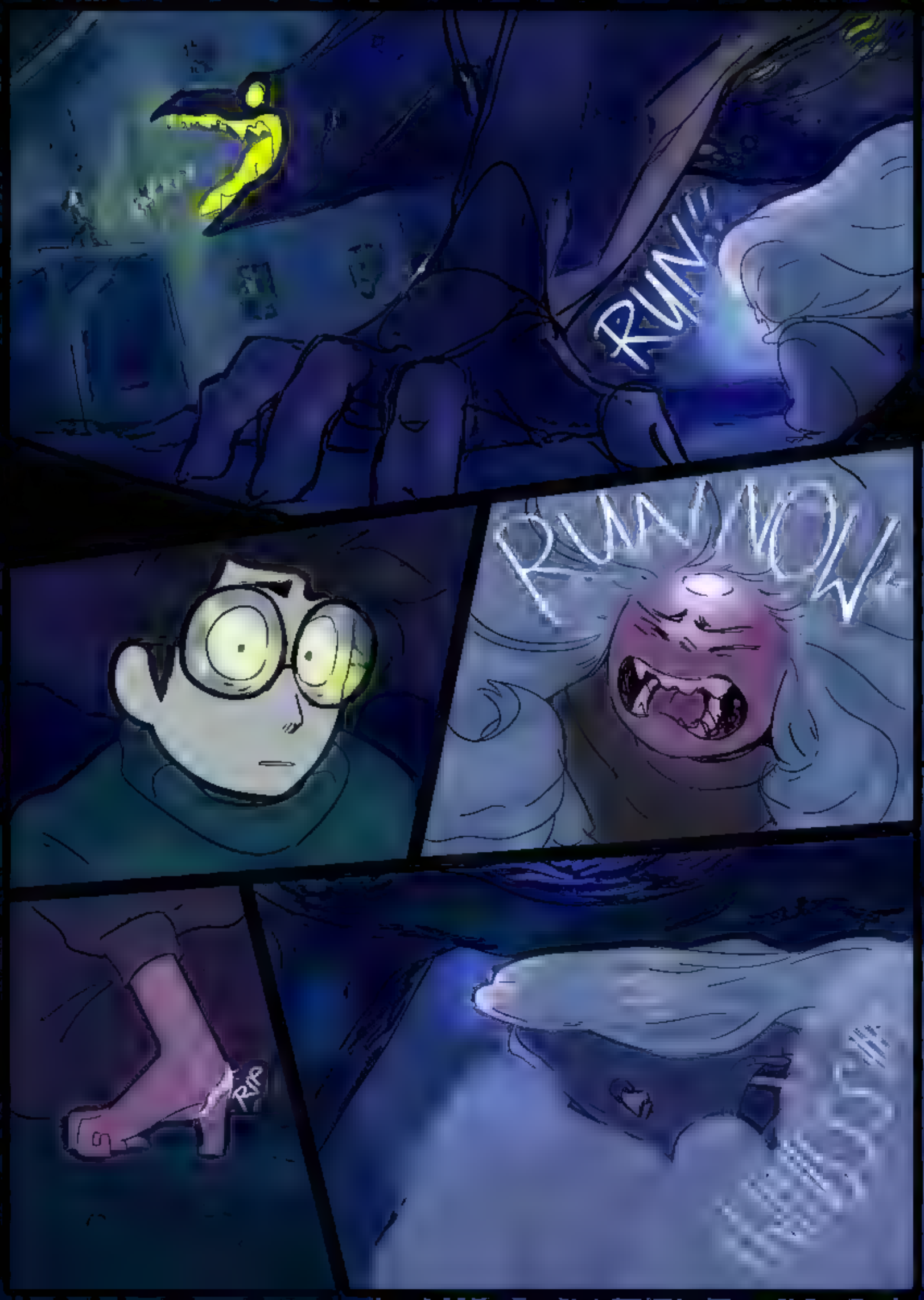
- YOU DIDN'T LIVE WITH THEM.

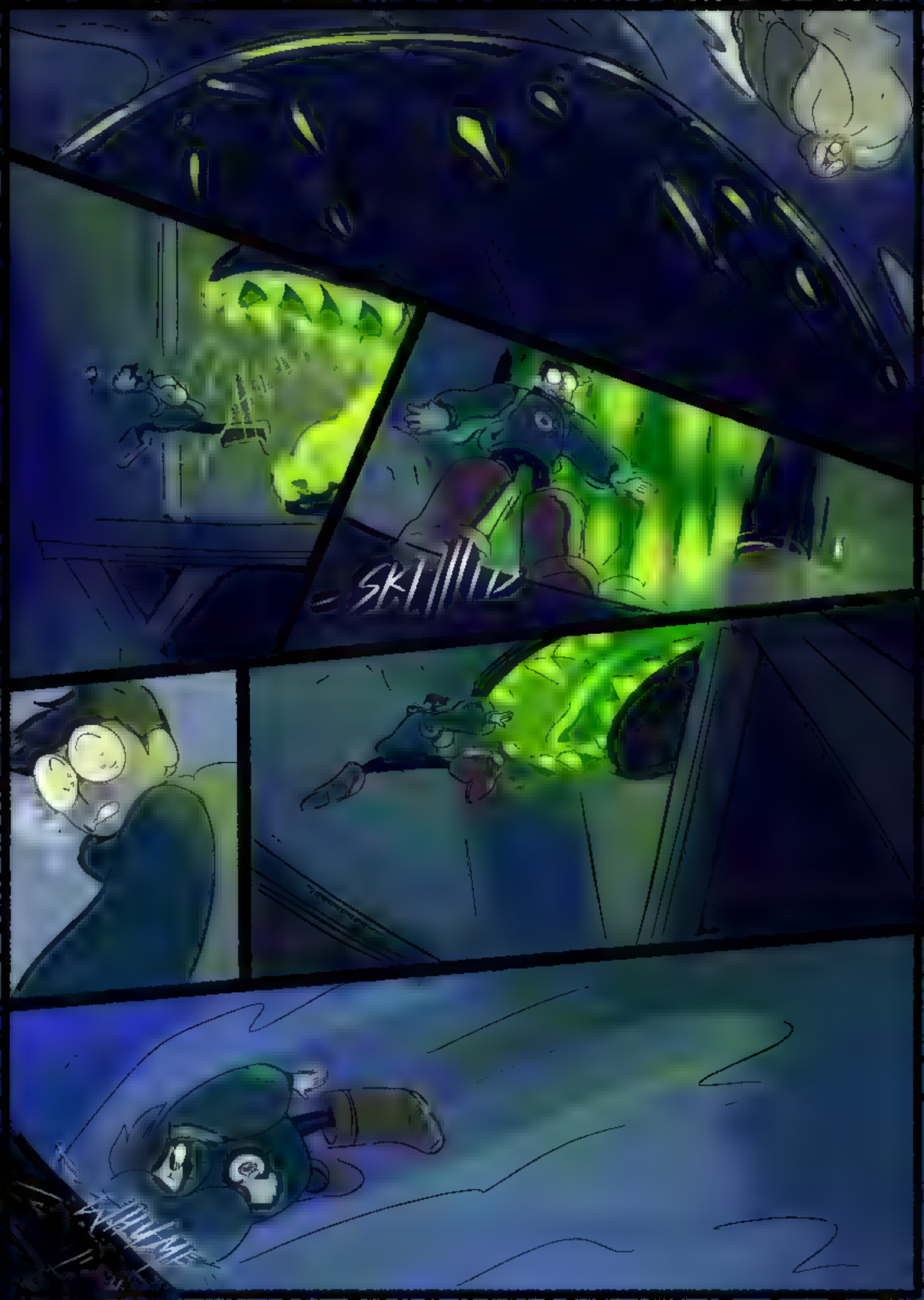

I AM TIRED OF BEING THIS.
YOU ARE BORING ME TOO
TOO SMALL AND USELESS
YOU SAID
WANTED
BARGAIN
BUT YOU
ONLY
MAKE
THREAT
GIVE ME
YOUR
OFFER.
...THERE'S NO POINT IS THERE
WE OUGHT TO GO BACK TO FIGHTING
NO MORE GAMES.
DO NOT FORGET WHO PUT YOU IN THE GR-
GGGT-
YOU'LL-

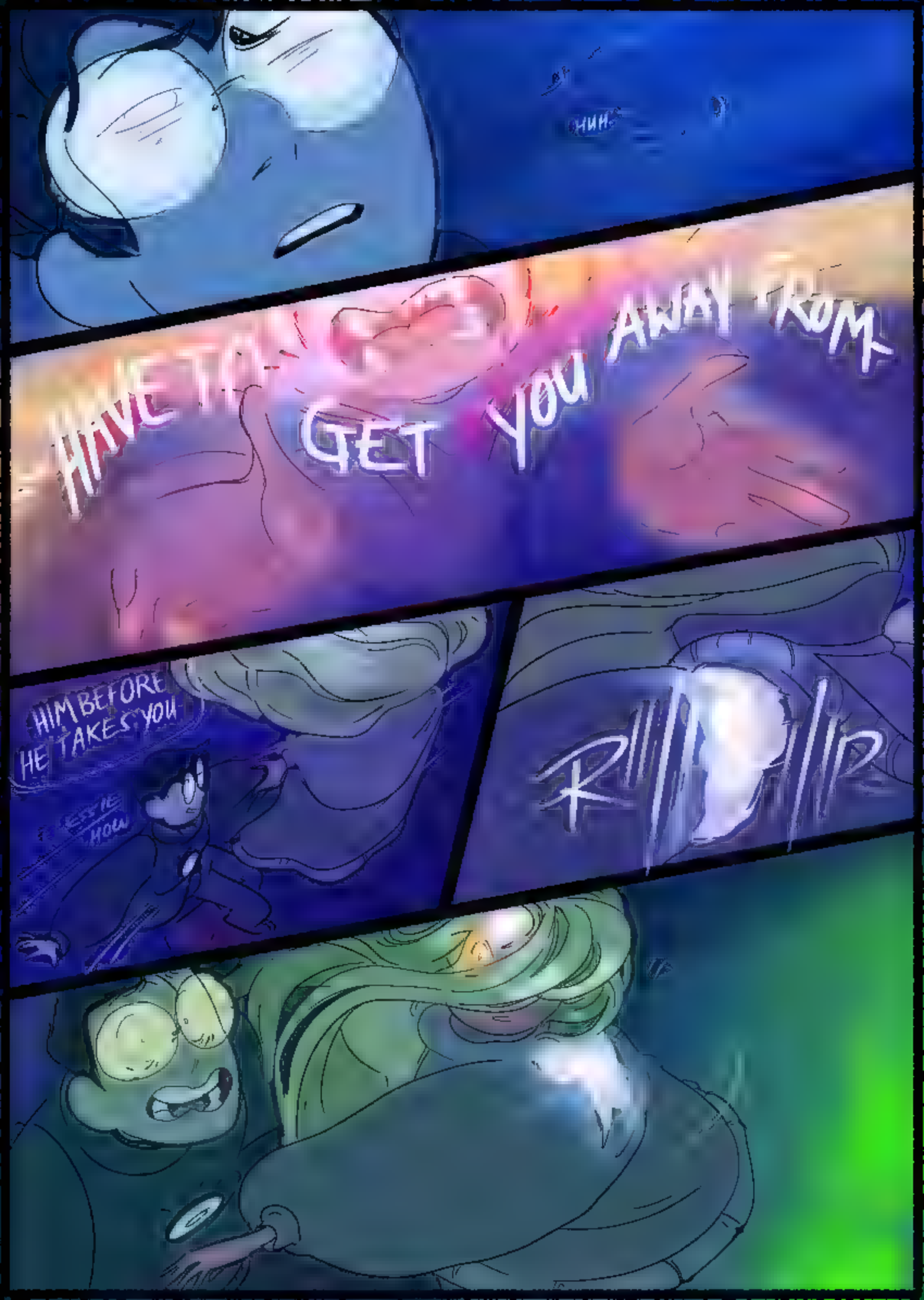
SLAM
OHMYGOD ESIE-




BUT
CELINE SAD
LOOK OUT
KRO

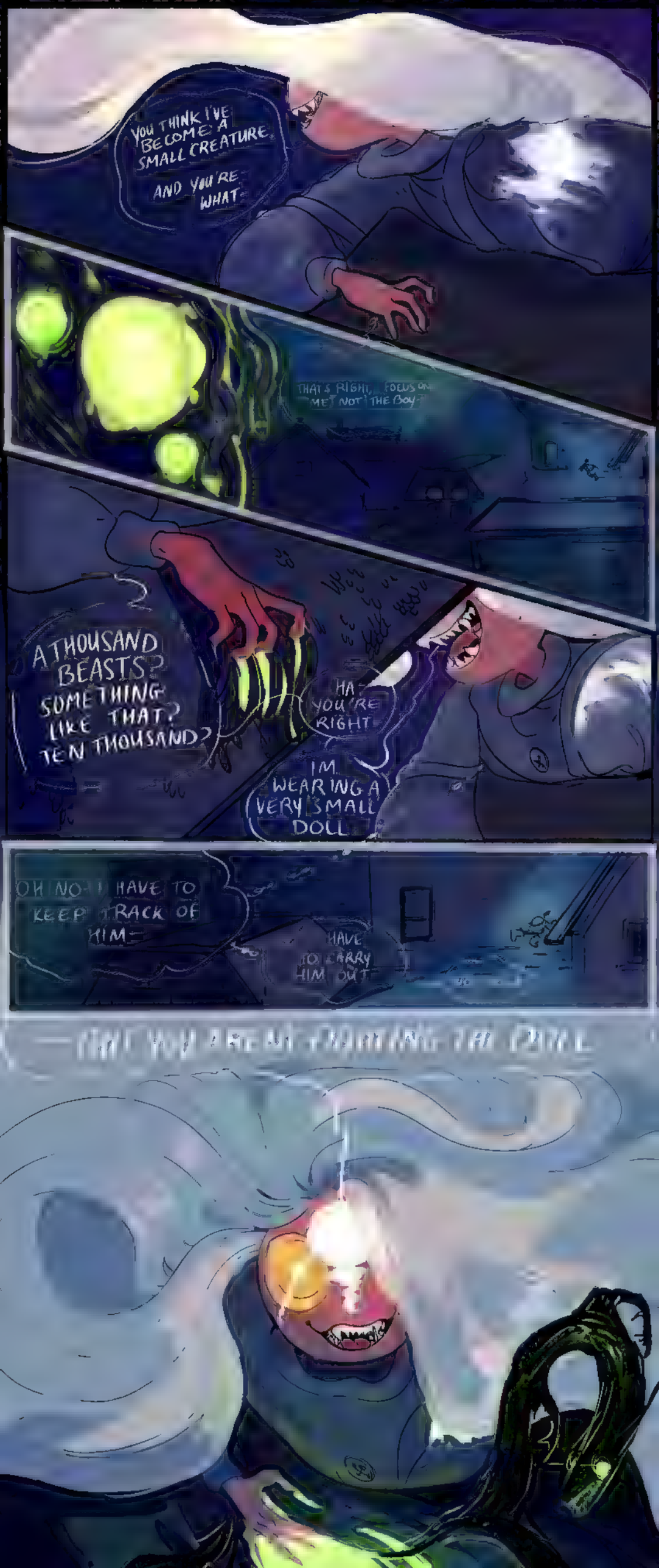

RUN!
RUN NOW
RIP

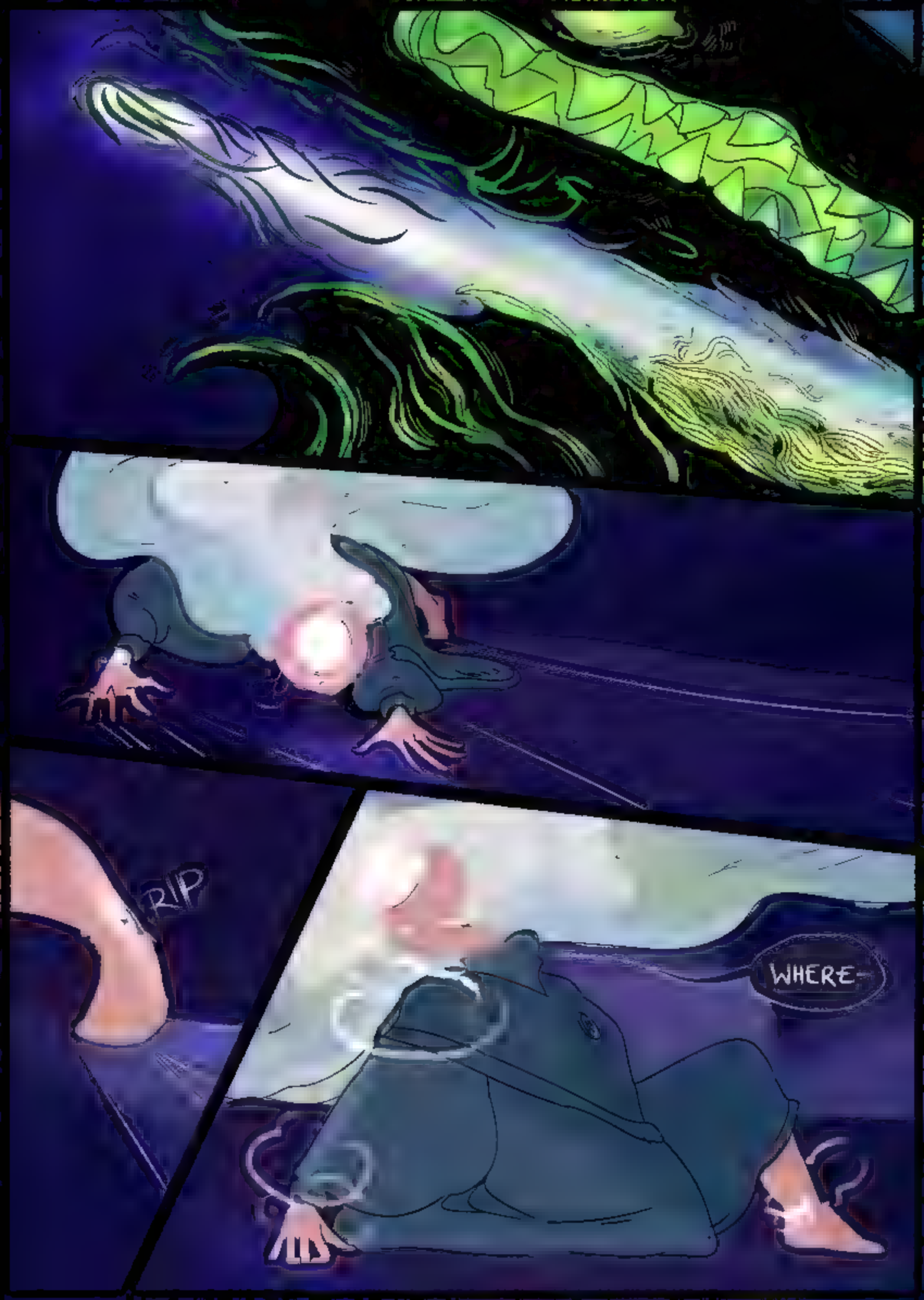

SKI
AWWME

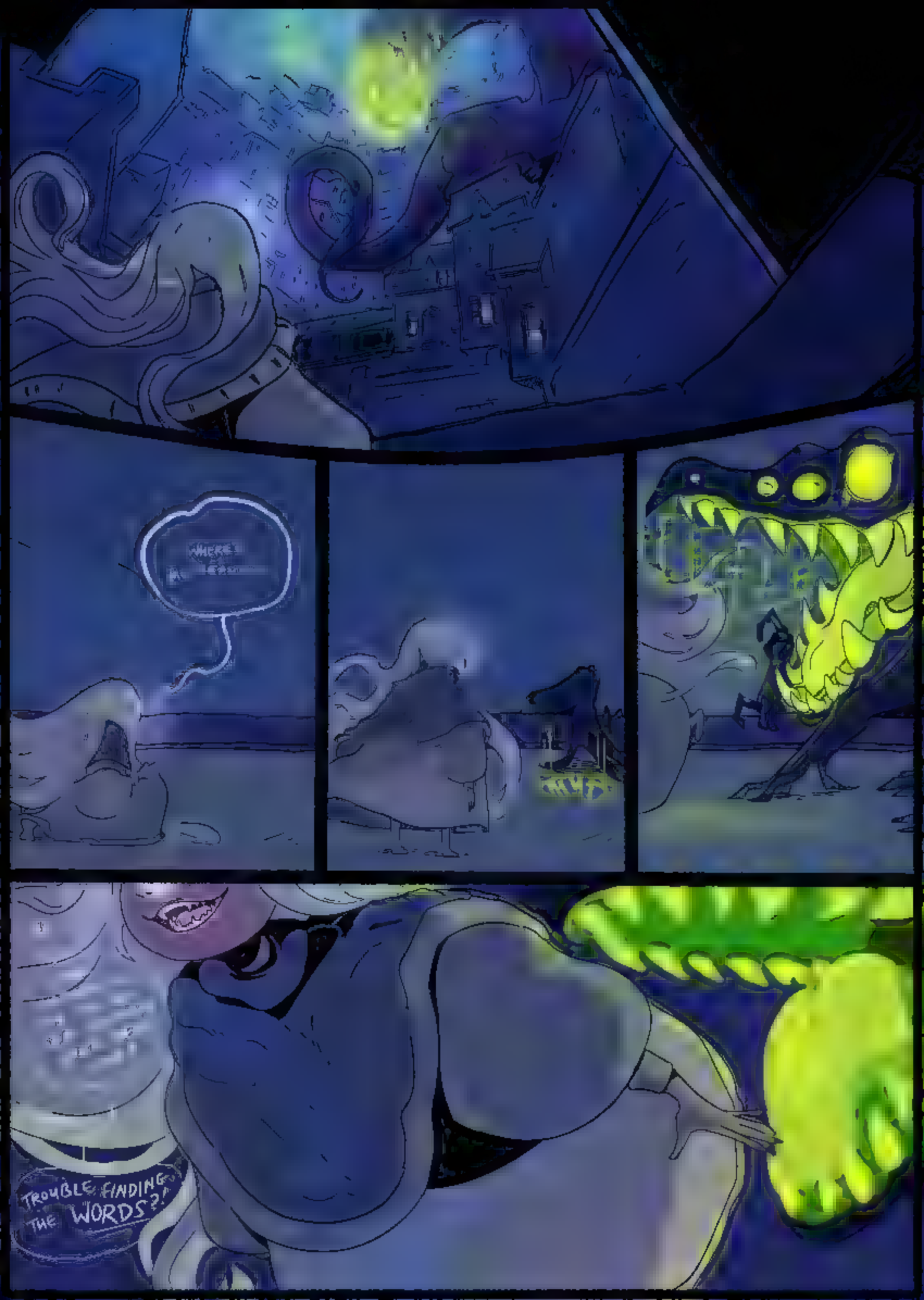

HAVE TO
GET YOU AWAY FROM
HIM BEFORE
HE TAKES YOU
ESSIE
MOUW
RRRRRR

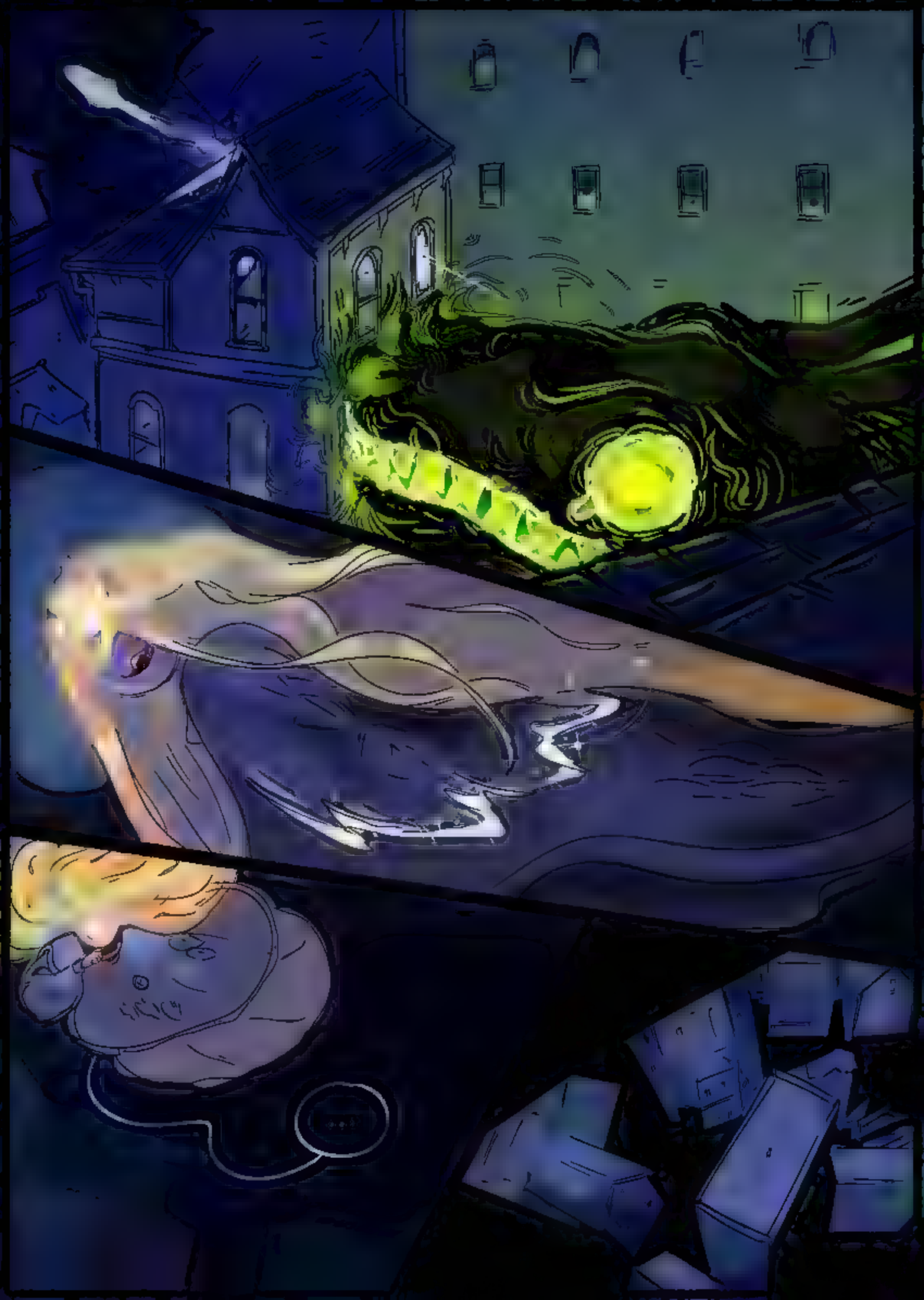
SLAM
SCRA
youuuu

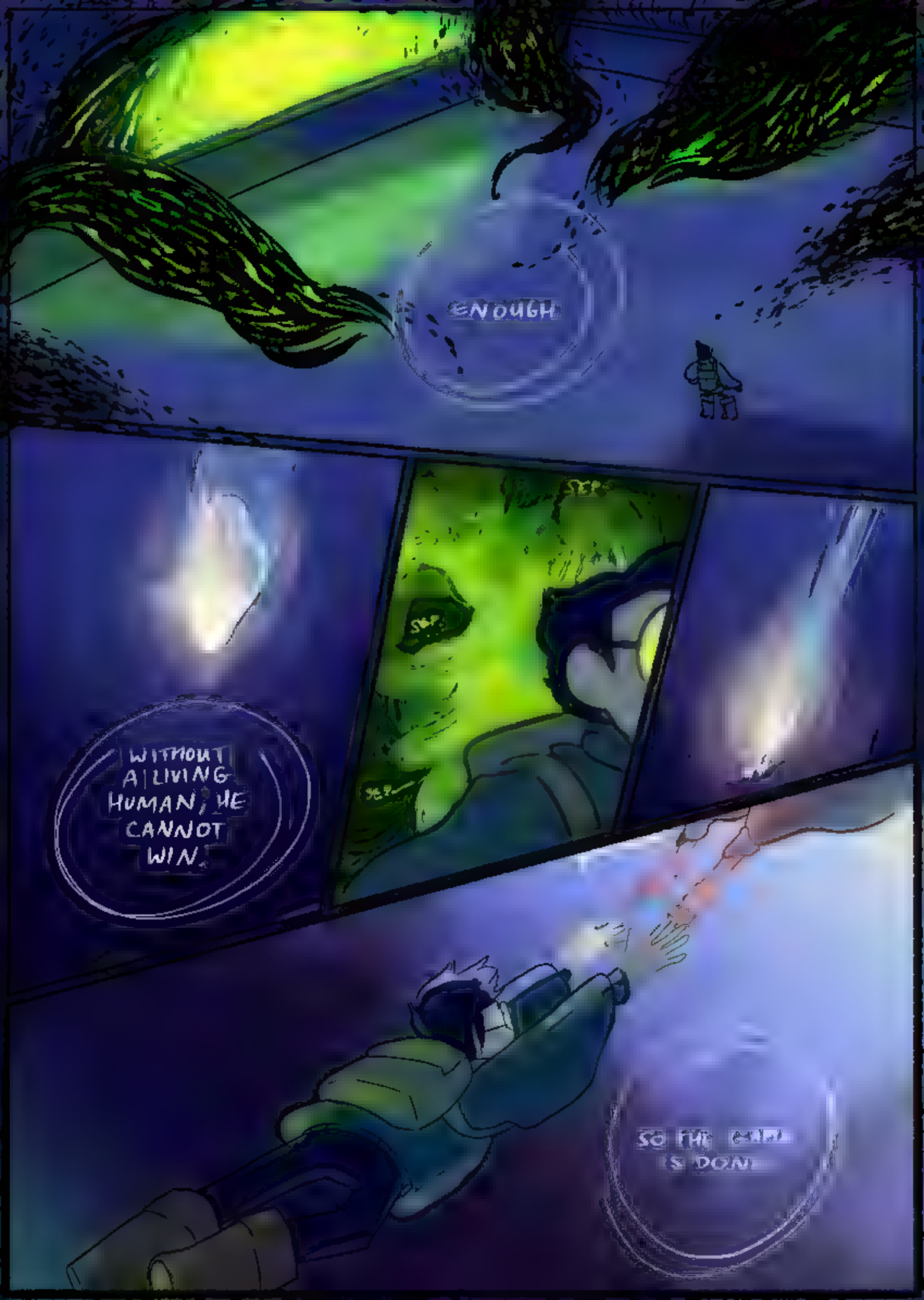
YOU MAKE YOURSELF-
SO SMALL A PLAYTHING
YOU WASTE TIME AND LET ME GROW
I DON'T UNDERSTAND
THIS NEW GAME OF YOURS
PERHAPS...
ARE YOU LETTING ME
I WILL NOT SPARE YOU FOR IT
YOU'RE REALLY HUNG UP ON APPEARANCES, HUH?


YOU THINK I'VE BECOME A SMALL CREATURE
AND YOU'RE WHAT
THAT'S RIGHT, FOCUS ON ME! NOT THE BOY!
A THOUSAND BEASTS? SOMETHING LIKE THAT? TEN THOUSAND?
HA YOU'RE RIGHT
IM WEARING A VERY SMALL DOLL
OH NO I HAVE TO KEEP TRACK OF HIM
HAVE TO CARRY HIM OUT
—THAT YOU ARE NOW LOOKING AT ONE


RIP
WHERE-


WHERE'S
TROUBLE FINDING THE WORDS?!

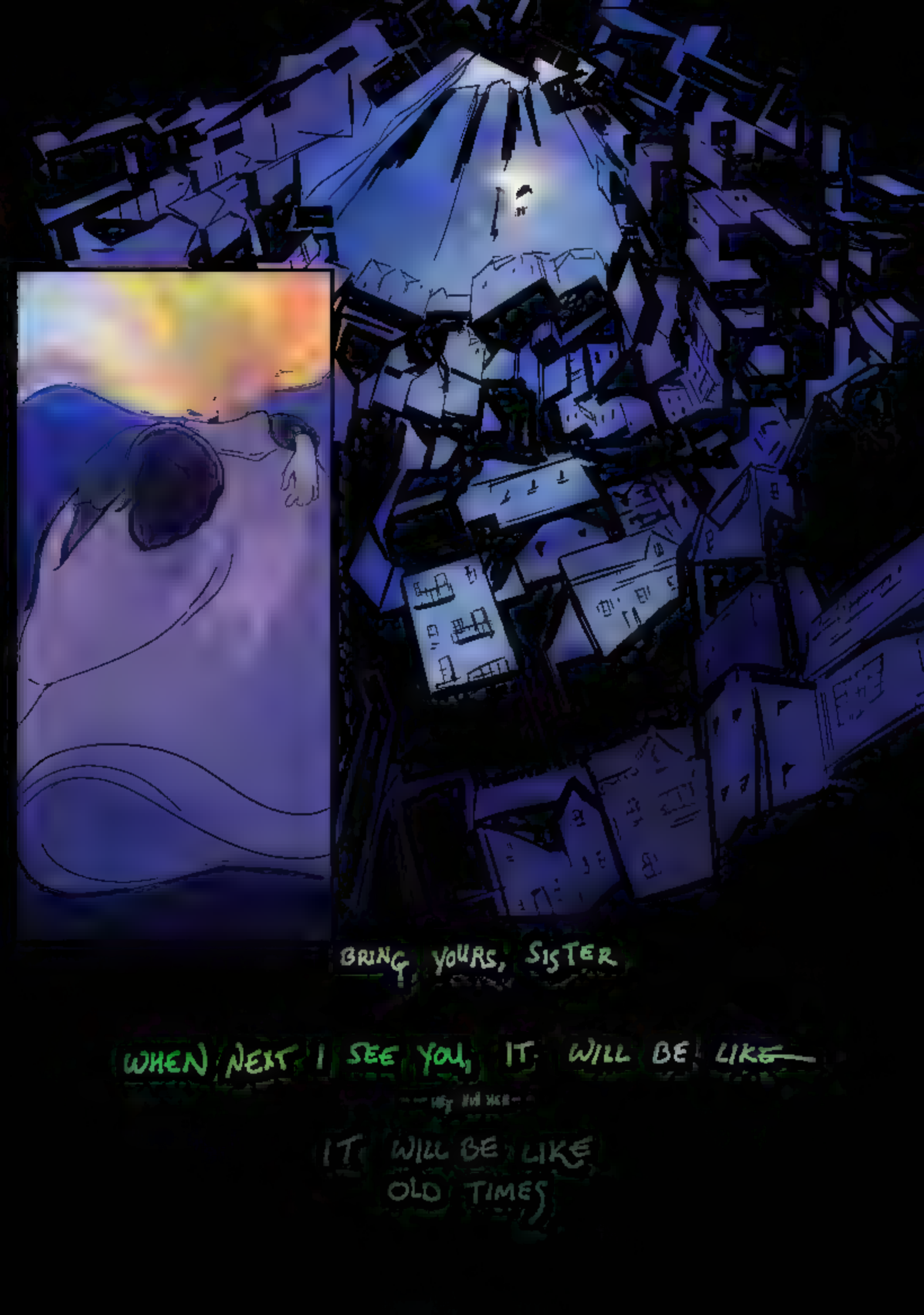



ENOUGH
WITHOUT A LIVING HUMAN, HE CANNOT WIN.

RIIIIIP
IT DOESN'T MATTER- HOLD ONTO ME, I WON'T LET HIM TAKE YOU
YOU - YOUR ARM Y- YOUR-
HAHAHAH

SEPTIMUS

BREAH.
YOU MAY TAKE THE SHELL, SISTER.
IT WILL BE A REMINDER OF OUR PACT.
I AM HAPPY TO LEND IT TO YOU.
AFTER ALL,
I HAVE THE BOY ALREADY


BRING YOURS, SISTER
WHEN NEXT I SEE YOU, IT WILL BE LIKE—
IT WILL BE LIKE OLD TIMES

I'M...
I'M SORRY THAT WE WERE NEVER PROPERLY INTRODUCED
SEP IS A NICE NAME
YOU WERE RIGHT NOT TO TRUST ME WITH IT

WHAT CAN I POSSIBLY SAY TO RAINA—

RAINA—

RAINA

BUT SHE'S UP THERE,

AND I'M—

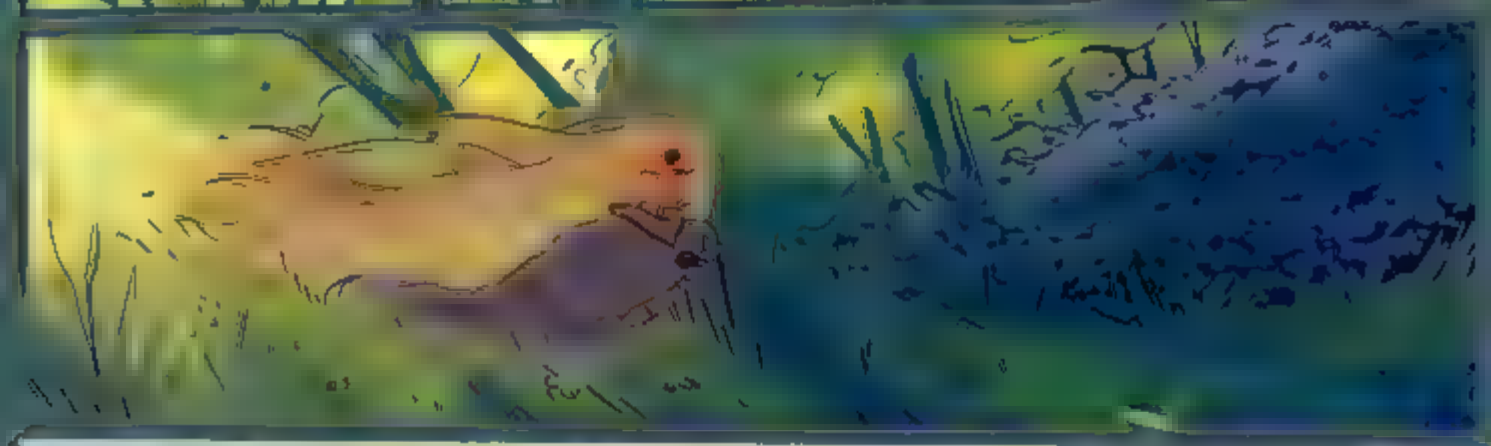
HM.

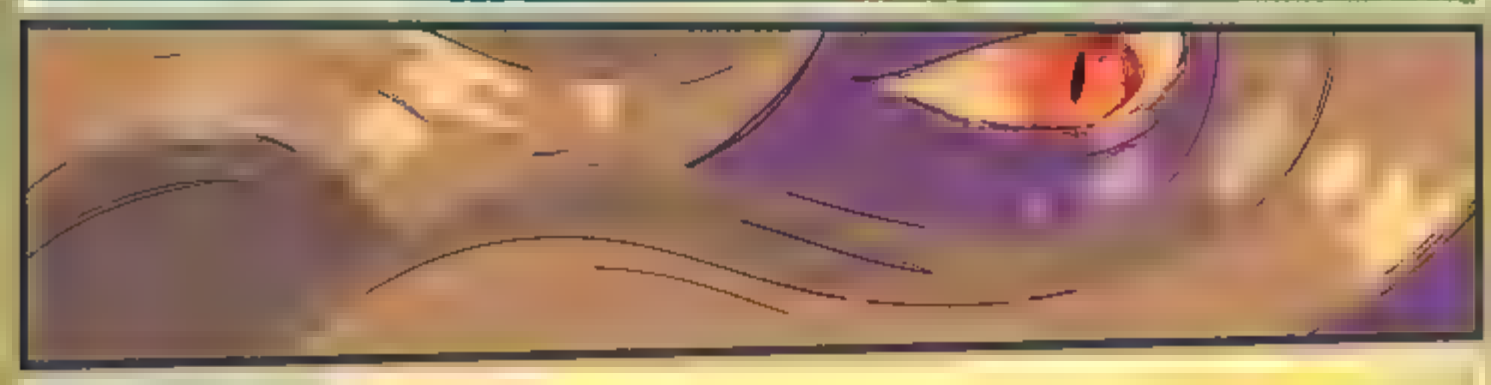
BACK HERE HUH?

OH.

GOD.

I'M HOME.





...
ESSIE?
WHAT HAPPENED?!
WHAT'S WRONG? DID YOUR BROTHER DO SOM—
RAINA

NEED TO SPEAK WITH YOU

WHAT HAPPENED, ESSIE

JUST- JUST FOLLOW ME

ITS ABOUT SEP

PFFOSCT

WHAT-

HERE OVER HERE

HE IS SLEEPING ONLY SLEEPING

BUT

HE WONT WAKE.

YOU BROUGHT HIM BACK

THANK YOU

DO NOT THANK ME
I WAS TOO LATE.
IT'S REALLY NOT YOUR FAULT HE'S BEEN HAVING NIGHTMARES AND THIS IT'S NOT A SHOCK
WHAT. FOR HOW LONG?
AGES
THE WHOLE TRIP HE WAS SCARED TO SLEEP
AGES
AGES
WHAT A FOOL I AM! SO HE'S BEEN FEEDING AT THE BOY ALL THIS TIME—
A HUMAN CHILD HAS ENOUGH POWER TO DO THAT?! OR— OR DOES IT TAP INTO SOME TALENT I SENSED NOTHING WHEN I SPOKE TO THE CHILD BUT PERHAPS HE
BUT THIS MEANS THE NAME EATER IS PLAYING THE LONG GAME WHY CONSUME A PACTMAKER AND POWER SOURCE TO TAUNT ME? UNLESS THE CHILD IS ALIVE INSIDE HIM—
BUT HE GAVE ME THE BODY LIKE A TAUNT WHY RELINQUISH IT AT ALL? WHAT USE IS A HUMAN'S CONSCIOUSNESS IN THIS GAME WITHOUT A
BODY
COME AWAY FROM THERE
WE MAY HAVE HIM BACK YET.

CELINE
WATCH HIM
HE CANT OVERHEAR US
NOD
KEEP THE OTHER CHILDREN WITH YOU
YES
RAINA
I OWE YOU AN EXPLANATION
THAT IS THE LEAST I OWE YOU
WILL YOU COME WITH ME?
I DESERVE YOUR FORGIVENESS EVEN LESS THAN YOUR THANKS
EXPLAIN
THEN I'LL DECIDE IF YOU HAVE IT
MORE THAN FAIR

THAT'S FAR ENOUGH
SIGH
OKAY
I'M A VERY OLD FOOL
I'D RATHER LOSE TO HIM THAN SEE ANY MORE OF YOU HARMED-
BUT- BUT I HAVE TO TELL YOU. YOU DESERVE TO DECIDE IT NOW
YOU THOUGHT I WAS GIVING YOU GIFTS, BUT I WAS JUST SEARCHING FOR SOMEONE TO FIX MY MISTAKES
I LED YOU INTO DANGER
...
I MADE AN EXPERIMENT OF YOU, AND WHEN I FELT SOMEONE ELSE TRY TO TAKE YOUR NAME, I TOLD MYSELF THAT I CARED ABOUT THE INTEGRITY OF MY PLAN.
I AM NOT LIKE CELINE, WHO LOVES HER SISTER ENOUGH TO PUT HER OWN LIFE IN MY HANDS,
OR LIKE YOU, GOING INTO THE UNKNOWN OVER AND OVER FOR YOUR PARENTS. I AM NOT HUMAN AND I CANNOT LOVE YOU, AND THE CHANGES I'VE MADE TO MYSELF TO BE LIKE YOU- THEY HURT—

I AM LIKE NOTHING ELSE FROM THIS WORLD, BUT THERE IS NO HUMAN HEART IN ME.

I DONT KNOW WHAT TO SAY

I FEEL KINDA NUMB RIGHT NOW, SO ITS HARD TO THINK AND I DONT KNOW HOW I FEEL YET

IF YOU KEEP EXPLAINING THEN MAYBE I'LL KNOW

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR PLAN

AND ABOUT THE NAME EATER

THE NAME EATER-

GHK

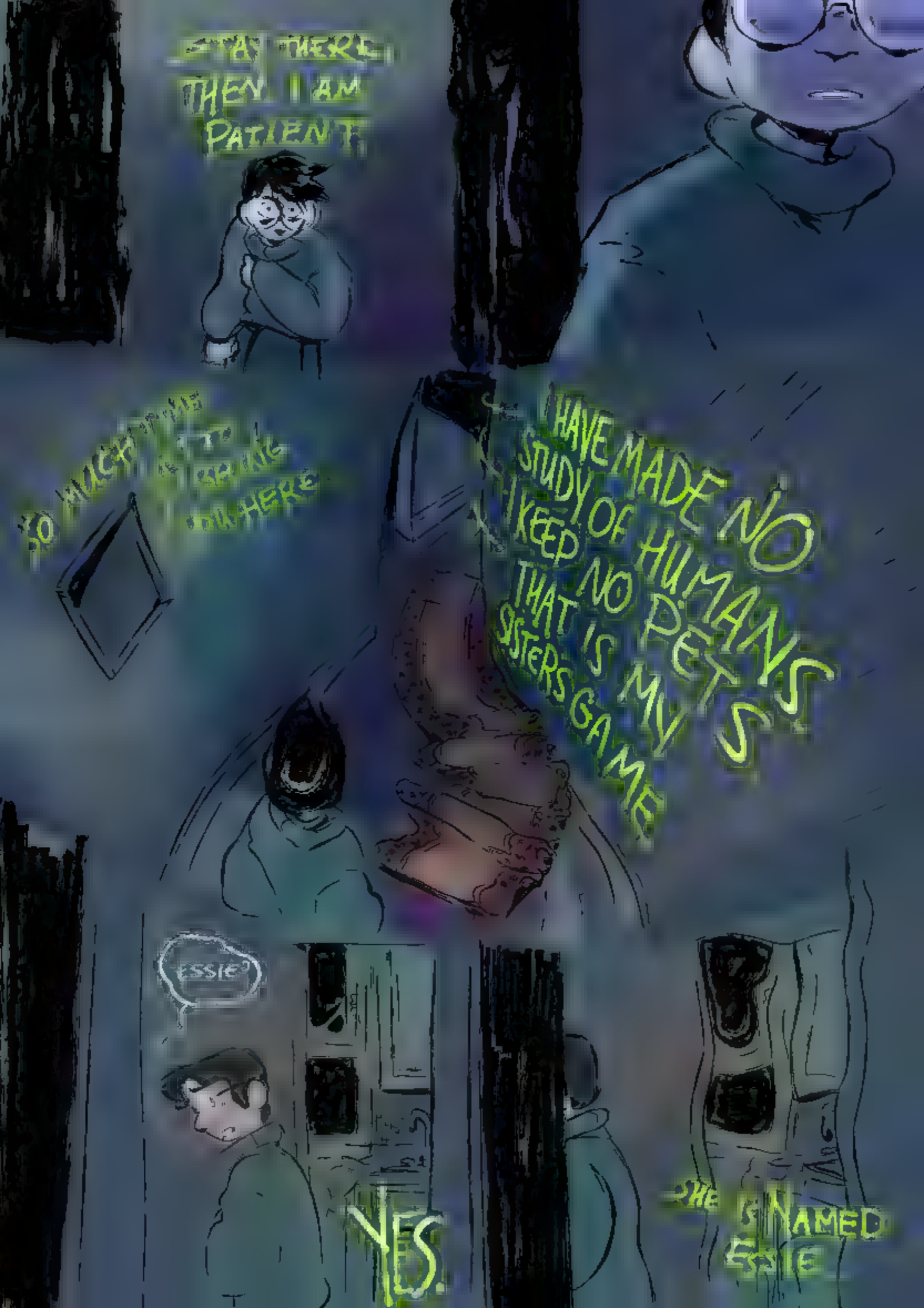
BRUSH

NOT IN THERE

I CAN TELL IF I'M NOT REAL

I AM NOT TRYING TO FOOL YOU, SEPTIMUS

YEAH
COULDA FOOLED
ME ABOUT
FOOLING ME
I WOULD LIKE
YOU COMFORTABLE
HA
YOU HAVE A FUNNY
WAY OF DECIDING
WHERE I'M
COMFORTABLE
WA


STAY THERE. THEN I AM PATIENT.
I HAVE MADE NO STUDY OF HUMANS I KEEP NO PETS THAT IS MY SISTERS GAME
SO MUCH TO SEE IN HERE
ESSIE?
YES.
SHE'S NAMED ESSIE

WHERE ARE THE PEOPLE?
SIGH
YOU I PROMISED ME ANSWERS ONCE
YOU NEEDED SOMETHING
AND YOU SHOWED ME THE UNDERGROUND THAT'S WHAT IT WAS
I ONLY REALIZED IT AFTER YOU DRAGGED ME DOWN THERE
GREEN
BUT THE HUMANS WHOSE HOUSES THOSE WERE ARENT THERE IT'S ALL EMPTY.
WHERE ARE THEY?
YOU NEEDN'T BOTHER WITH IT

GASP
GASP
GASP
YOU
YOU ARE NOT
STOP BREATHING LIKE THAT
GLORK
TCHLP

IT WAS SUCH A WASTE. WHAT YOU SAW IN THE UNDERGROUND AN UTTER FAILURE
BUT THE WOUND IS FATAL
WHAT WE DO NOW DOES NOT MATTER. THAT IS NOT WHY I BROUGHT YOU HERE

THAT'S NOT REALLY YOU. WHERE ARE YOU REALLY.

ALL AROUND YOU I MOVE DEEP IN THE WORLD OPENING IT UP FROM THE INSIDE A MOLTING ANIMAL PUSHING AGAINST ITS SKIN

I WAS BENEATH YOU WHEN YOUR JOURNEY BEGAN. PART OF ME STILL CURLS THERE.

WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?

AH!

FINALLY THE RIGHT QUESTION

WE COULD WORK TOGETHER. NONE OF THE OTHER CHILDREN MADE IT AS FAR AS YOU HAVE.
WHAT OTHER CHILDREN?
ENOUGH
THIS WAY, SER.
THUD
AAH

DO YOU THINK MY SISTER IS HERE TO SAVE YOU?
THERE WERE MANY I NEVER SAW.
SHE LEFT THEM ALONE. LOTS OF THINGS HAPPENED TO THEM.
YOU WANT ME TO CONSIDER HELPING YOU? THEN KNOCK IT OFF
STOP IT
MEAN GOD I GET IT

FORGIVE ME.

SEE? NO CAUSE FOR ALARM

I AM BUILDING AN UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR MIND. YOU ARE MUCH LIKE ME, DEE.

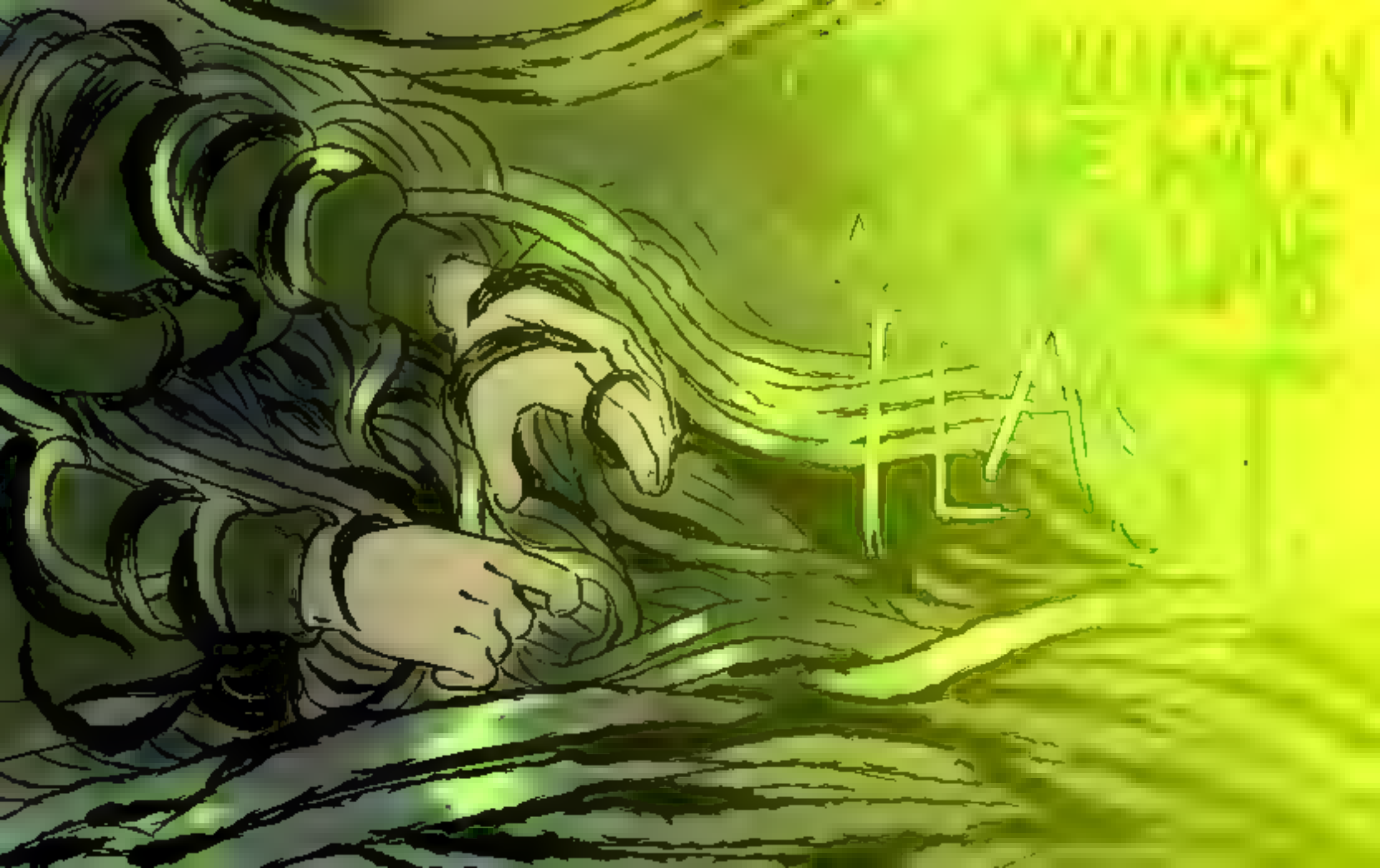
BUT YOU HAVE DONE WHAT I COULD NOT.

YOU—CLEVER—BRAVE—

FOUND A NEW WORLD.

AND I WANT TO DO WHAT YOU DID NOT DARE TO DREAM IN YOUR DEEPEST HEART—
SET THE LAST ONE ABLAZE BEHIND ME.
IF YOU BROUGHT ME BACK THROUGH YOUR DOOR, WE COULD LEAVE THIS HUSK BEHIND. I WOULD EAT MY FILL AND MOVE ON—
—AND EVERY WORLD WOULD BE OPEN TO YOU

YOU WOULD NEVER BE HELPLESS AND TRAPPED AGAIN.
YOU'VE NEVER WANTED MAGIC? ENOUGH MAGIC TO GO WHEREVER YOU WISH? YOU DESERVE IT, SEP.
EVERY OTHER DOOR TO YOUR WORLD HAS CLOSED— EXCEPT YOURS. A POWER BORN FROM DESIRE, LIKE YOUR FRIEND NEEDED TOOLS TO FIGHT.
LIKE THE GIRL- KATE- NEEDED TO BREATHE AND GRASP AND REACH OUT. YOUR DESIRE IS MAGIC, TOO.
NORN WISHED TO RESEARCH. THE SISTER- TO FIGHT AND GUARD. YOU CAN SURPASS THEM ALL IF YOU DO WHAT I ASK YOU.
I WILL GLADLY LET YOU GO FIRST THROUGH EVERY DOOR. I WILL ONLY EAT AFTER YOU MOVE ON.



AND IF I SAY NO?
WHAT HAPPENS TO ME THEN?
WE HAVE SO MUCH TIME. YOU HAVE SO, SO LONG TO THINK IT OVER.
YOU WILL SEE REASON... EVENTUALLY

I DO NOT WANT TO DESTROY THIS PLACE
BUT SHE GIVES ME NO CHOICE
YOU ARE HERE BECAUSE OF HER SELFISHNESS
SEPTIMUS MY SON
I ONLY WANT TO SAVE YOU
HOW GULLIBLE DO YOU THINK I AM?
I AM SO SICK OF BEING LIED TO BY SOMETHING THAT'S ONLY GONNA KILL ME ANYWAY

WHAT ABOUT MY FRIENDS, HUH? IF YOU GET WHAT YOU WANT OUT OF ME WHAT HAPPENS TO THEM?
BY THE WAY— ANY REASON WHY YOU CANT SAY THEIR NAMES? WHY YOU CANT TALK ABOUT CELINE AND RAINA?
WORRIED THAT SHE'S GOING TO HEAR?
IF I CALL, WILL
ES

—AND I WERE——
SEP?
HE'S ?
I THINK HE'S FIGHTING IT !

HE IS IN THERE - NOT DEAD, NOT EATEN -
STILL CALLING OUT TO ME
EVEN THOUGH I LOST HIM.
HES USING YOUR NAME AND CELINES TO REACH ME. CAN YOU HEAR HIM?
..
RAINA?
NO. I CANT HEAR HIM NOT EVEN WHEN HES YELLING FOR MY HELP
ESSIE. WHY DID YOU TELL ME I COULD DO THIS? WHY DID YOU SEND SOMEONE WITH ME? I CANT SAVE - I CANT PROTECT ANY -
WUMPH
I'M SO SORRY, RAINA

BUT ENOUGH OF MY GUILT WHO DOES GUILT HELP? NONE OF US YOU SHOULD NEVER HAVE HAD TO DO IT ALONE. I CANT DO IT ALONE EITHER. I TRIED AND I LOST HIM..
ESSIE...
I HAVE BEEN ALONE FOR SO LONG...
I CAN PROMISE YOU THIS— I WILL PUT YOU FIRST. AND I WILL BE HONEST.
I KNOW WE CAN SAVE THEM. SEP — AND YOUR FAMILY
IF YOU WILL TRY WITH ME.
I BELIEVE YOU
I WANT TO TRY
DO YOU WANT THIS..?
NO ?!?
BUT BEFORE THAT, WE HAVE TIME FOR ME TO KEEP MY PROMISE AND TELL YOU EVERYTHING.
MEEN
-PEEP

I'M JUST NOT SURE HOW TO BEGIN TO EXPLAIN—

BUT

HERE'S A START

ACHARM? WHAT DOES IT DO?

IT'S A CONNECTION TO ME—ONE I SHOULD NEVER HAVE KEPT WITHOUT ASKING BUT NOW, YOU SHOULD BE THE ONE TO WIELD IT

ACTIVATE IT WITH A NEW INTENTION

IF I CAN'T TELL YOU, THEN I'LL *SHOW* YOU.

ENOUGH.
AND YOU UNDERSTAND NOTHING.
BUT I WILL SHOW YOU
COME NOW- YOU WANT TO KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT DEMONS,
DON'T YOU?

WE WERE GODS
... NOT AT FIRST.
OR MAYBE...
MAYBE EVERYTHING WAS
THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A PERFECT WORLD
BUT THIS WAS A LUSH ONE.
THE LAND WAS MAGIC. AND OUT OF THE LAND SPRANG THE SOULS OF THAT MAGIC: THE FIRST DENIZENS. EVERY ONE OF US SUITED TO OUR HILL, OUR POOL, OUR HOLLOW EVERY WHIRLING ATOM OF US A CREATRIX

WE SPRANG FROM THE SAME SOIL, SHE AND I.

WE WERE NOT THE ONLY PAIR OF TWINS, BUT WE WERE THE ONLY ONES TO SURVIVE

BECAUSE I LEFT.

MY BROTHER'S MAGIC GREW, AND ANYTHING SMALL ENOUGH TO EAT BECAME HIS PREY.

THERE WAS FIGHTING

AND AFTER

FEASTING

I KNEW HE WOULD NOT STOP

SHE LEFT ME ALONE. SIPHONED MAGIC OUT OF WILD BEASTS. TOOK SHARDS OF THE WORLD. I DID NOT CARE. I WAS EATING.

THE ANTS' TOGETHERNESS WAS MORE AWE INSPIRING THAN THEIR PALACES.
IN A WORLD OF PREDATOR AND PREY, THEY CHOSE TO BE GLASSMAKERS.
ASCEND
EVEN MORE SO BECAUSE A NEW
THE ANTS WERE ALSO THE FIRST OF US TO BE SCIENTISTS.
AND THE FIRST TO REALIZE THAT A WORLD WOVEN TOGETHER WITH MAGIC MAY HAVE CRACKS.
THERE IT WAS, BELOW THE PALACE ALIVE IN LIGHT
A WINDOW TO ANOTHER WORLD.

GRAB
I LOOKED THROUGH AND SAW WONDERS.

THERE IS NO WORLD OF MUNDANITY THERE ARE ONLY WORLDS OF WONDERS

I SPENT A VERY LONG TIME WATCHING

I IMAGINED WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO START AGAIN

THIS LIFE WITH THE ANTS WAS, AFTER ALL, STILL HERE

AND THERE WAS SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT HUMANS

THERE'S SOMETHIN' YOU'VE GOT TO SEE
WHAT?!
NO!

-BUT, OF COURSE
I FAILED.

IT WAS A CATASTROPHE
I COULD NOT HAVE
FORESEEN

BUT
A CATASTROPHE
STILL.

NOTHING COULD
BE REBUILT.

AND AFTER THE RIFT COLLAPSED, THERE WAS NO WINDOW, NO DOOR

THE ARCHIVIST AND THE ANTS BUILT UP FROM THE RUBBLE THEY ABANDONED THE PROJECT

I CARRIED ON THINKING I COULD SLIDE A FINGERNAIL INTO THE SEAM OF REALITY

THE MAGIC I'D FELT BEFORE ITCHED BEHIND MY EYES

MY BROTHER GREW STRONGER

I'D HAVE NO HELP FROM THE ARCHIVIST NOW

HSSt-

THOSE BEYOND THE MIRROR HAD ANOTHER KIND OF MAGIC-

MY SISTER
SHOULD NOT FORGET
ME.

SHOULD NOT LEAVE
ME ALONE

SHE SHOULD HAVE
KILLED ME WHEN
SHE HAD THE CHANCE!

I'D HAD ENOUGH.

SO

I GOT HER ATTENTION.

I JUST COULD PASS
STANDING BEFORE
WINDOWS.

I HAD A FINAL IDEA

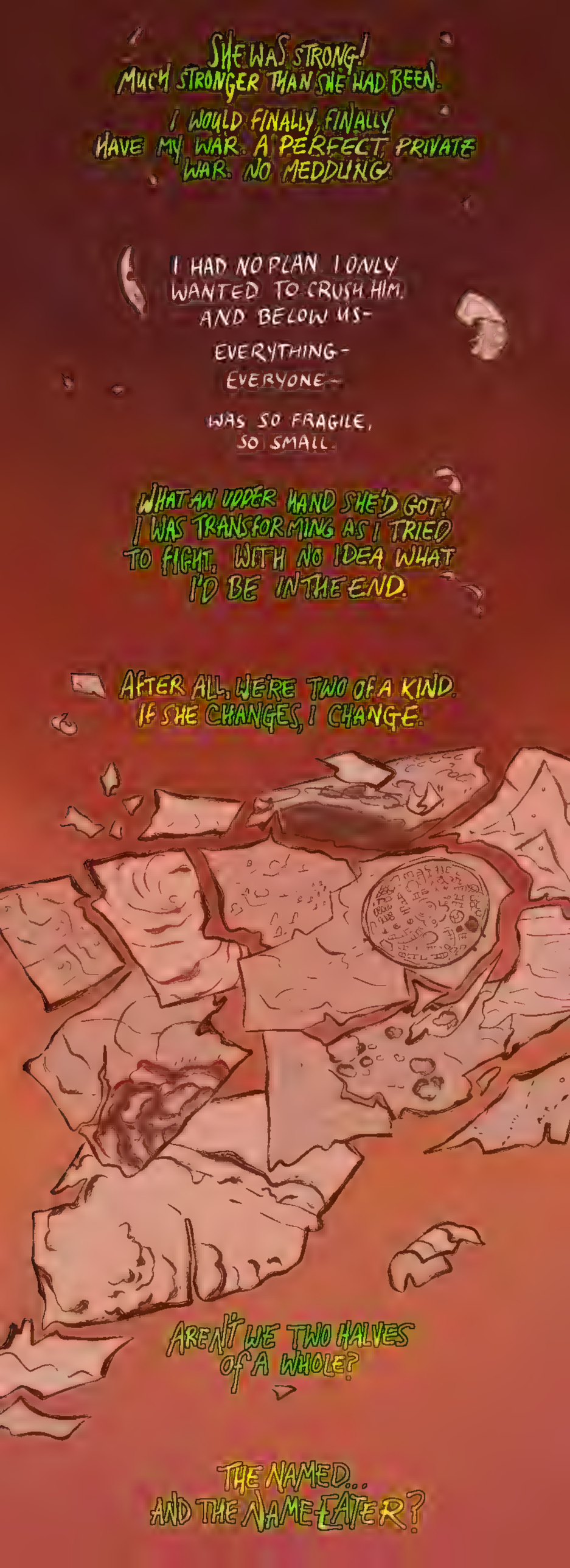
A DESPRATE UNTESTED
IDEA.

AN ANT PRINCESS MAY BECOME
AN ANT QUEEN.

SO IF I CHANGED MY TITLE
I COULD ACCESS A HUMAN POWER

A NAME
IS AN
ESSENCE
AND I AM-

I FELT MY SELFHOOD
SNAP


SHE WAS STRONG!
MUCH STRONGER THAN SHE HAD BEEN.
I WOULD FINALLY, FINALLY
HAVE MY WAR. A PERFECT, PRIVATE
WAR. NO MEDDLING.
I HAD NO PLAN. I ONLY
WANTED TO CRUSH HIM.
AND BELOW US-
EVERYTHING-
EVERYONE-
WAS SO FRAGILE,
SO SMALL.
WHAT AN UDDER HAND SHE'D GOT!
I WAS TRANSFORMING AS I TRIED
TO FIGHT. WITH NO IDEA WHAT
I'D BE IN THE END.
AFTER ALL, WE'RE TWO OF A KIND.
IF SHE CHANGES, I CHANGE.
AREN'T WE TWO HALVES
OF A WHOLE?
THE NAMED...
AND THE NAMEEATER?

I WAS AT HIS THROAT
AND I DID NOT GLANCE DOWN
UNTIL HE SAID
LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE

I WAS WEAKENED
SHE ONLY NEEDED
TO STRIKE ME DOWN.

DO IT. YOU'LL
THEN HAVE
RUINED HUSK OF
A WORLD ALL
FOR YOUR OWN.

NO.

I REGRET IT.
I REGRET IT.

SHE SAID, "I WILL LET YOU GO."
SHE SAID, "I WILL SHOW YOU A PORTAL."

SHE SAID "I WILL TRADE YOUR LIFE FOR
YOUR HELP." SHE MEANT TO
WIN BY TRICKERY.
SHE SAID "OPEN THEM ALL
AND PATCH THE WORLD WHOLE AGAIN"

HE COULD EAT HIS WAY THROUGH, AS I'D GUESSED HE BECAME THE THING I LACKED

CHEWING, RIPPING

HE PULLED THROUGH SICKENINGLY HEAVY, LONG STRINGS OF EARTH,

I WATCHED, ENRAPTURED. SO MANY NEW DOORS

AND LIKE A TORN MAP

FLIPPED AND PATCHED TOGETHER FROM THE BACK

THIS WORLD TOOK ON THE FORM YOU KNOW

I ANCHORED HIM HERE. I WOULD LET HIM REACH THROUGH, BUT NEVER CAUGHT.

HER WRETCHED, LYING TONGUE PROMISING ME FREEDOM AFTER—

I WOULD NOT HAVE LET HIM OUT EVEN THEN, TO UNLEASH HIM ON THE WORLD. I'D STUDIED TO LET HIM CONSUME THE CREATURES THAT FASCINATED ME. NO

STEALING SOME EARTH FELT LIKE A LESSER SIN. WITHOUT IT, THE NUTS, THE SHIFTING SANDS, THE GRAIN, EVERY SHAPE OF THING WOULD BE UNMADE AND I TOO, ME

AND ADORING TOGETHER

WHEN HE MOVED TO CLOSE IT

HE HAD ALREADY EXHAUSTED HIMSELF, BUT MY POWER WAS STILL FRESH. SO WITH ALL THAT I HAD, I SPRANG UPON HIM.

AND I TOOK HOLD OF THE CHASM AND WRENCHED IT SHUT

AND SHE THE CREATURE YOU THINK WILL SAVE YOU—

SHE IS BURIED IN THE DARK COLD GROUND IN THE NOTHINGNESS ALONE SILENCE IN SILENCE ALIVE!!

SEALING HIM AWAY LEFT ME DRAINED NEAR DEATH.

THEN I REMEMBERED THE PORTALS

THEY WERE EVERYWHERE, WINKING IN AND OUT OF EXISTENCE UNPREDICTABLY AND EVERY SO OFTEN...

MOST OF YOU WERE LUCKY AND JUMPED BACK THROUGH.

I RACED TOWARD EVERY PORTAL I COULD REACH, ELATED. SOMEONE AMONG THESE NEW CREATURES WOULD ANSWER MY EVERY WISH. I WAS SURE, SURE SURE

AND YOU. ALL OF YOU, SHONE IN MY EYE. I WAS NAMED AND SO WERE YOU.

AND TO MEET YOU, TO SPEAK WITH YOU, TO KNOW YOUR NEW MAGIC, TO BE SAVED BY YOU.

AND YET...

SOME REFUSED TO DEAL WITH ME OUTRIGHT

SOME I THOUGHT COULD SURVIVE ON THEIR OWN

SOME I DID NOT CATCH IN TIME

SOMETHING WAS WRONG.

WHEN I MET CELINE, I WAS ALREADY WORRIED. BUT WITH YOU...

UNDER THE ARCHIVIST'S EYE. LOTS OF DENIZENS HAD LEARNED HOW TO COOPERATE, SO I SENT ALL THE HUMANS TOWARDS HER. HUMANS AND ANTS ARE REALLY VERY SIMILAR

SHE IS., I KNEW I

I SET UP MY HOUSE AT THE CITY'S EDGE SO I COULD KEEP AN EYE ON THINGS.

BUT MOST OF THE HUMANS DIDN'T MAKE IT TO THE CITY

JUST.. JUST THE FEW YOU KNOW.

ONES LIKE ONES ALREADY BOUND TO ME

OR THE LUCKY FEW WHO FOUND ME

IF NOT FOR HER, NONE OF YOU WOULD REMAIN.

AND UNDER THE WORLD'S SKIN, AS IF IT WERE MY OWN, I COULD FEEL HIM PUSHING, WRITHING, PRESSING ON MY MAGIC LIKE A MIGRAINE.

THEN YOU CALLED OUT TO ME.

BUT WHEN YOU CALLED OUT TO ME I HAD ALREADY—

WE HAD PARLEYED AS TIME PASSED AND I STRUGGLED AGAINST HER. SHE KNEW THIS WAS AN UNWINNABLE GAME

SO I OFFERED:

LET ME LEAVE AND THIS WORLD IS YOURS

IT WILL BE IN YOUR HANDS

GIVE AWAY YOUR POWER

SHE SAID,

AND I WILL LET YOU GO. LET SOMETHING ELSE BECOME THE NAME EATER

THIS TIME, SHE HAD A NEW TRICK

AND YOU STAY AS YOU ARE?

NO, YOU MUST FIND YOUR OWN CHAMPION, THEN.

NO

AND THERE IS A CREATURE THAT COULD DO THIS?

YES.

ME.

YOU WENT AND... YOU WERE LAYING IN WAIT FOR ME.

YES

YOU BUILT A HOUSE FOR ME, YOU WERE MY FRIEND. YOU...

...

... KEEP TALKING, ESSIE.

THERE ISN'T MUCH LEFT TO TELL

TELLING YOU THIS FEELS ALMOST CRUEL. BUT RAINA, I SWEAR THOSE WERE THE HAPPIEST MONTHS I'VE EVER KNOWN.

I TOLD MYSELF THAT I MIGHT NEVER NEED TO ASK ANYTHING OF YOU.

I COULD HOLD HIM.

I KEPT AN EYE ON THE LAST OPEN PORTAL

I LEFT YOU TO BEG THE ARCHIVIST'S HELP. THERE WAS NOTHING SHE COULD DO FOR ME, BUT I LEFT WITH A MAP.

NORN'S MAP..

SEEING SOMEONE ELSE'S CATALOG OF THE DAMAGE MADE ME REALIZE HOW LITTLE TIME THIS WORLD HAS LEFT.

THEN I SAW THE OPEN HOLE IN THIS FOREST.. SO LITTLE TIME.

SEP ARRIVED SOON AFTER I GOT BACK TO YOU, SO I SENT YOU BOTH. YOU WERE MEANT TO BE MY FINAL RESORT, SAFE IN THE CITY WITH THE ARCHIVIST.

YOU SENT ME HERE TO FIGHT FOR YOU.

AND SEP WAS MEANT FOR THE NAME EATER. YOU WERE KEEPING HIM, JUST IN CASE.

...

YES.

SHE WILL LEAVE YOU HERE.

NO ONE'S COMING..?

RAINA

EVEN IF IT'S TOO MUCH TROUBLE TO GET AE

THEN, THEN — WHY'D YOU TRY TO GO GET HIM BACK?
IF WE DON'T — IF WE'RE NOT — IF WE'RE **SACRIFICES**,
THEN WHY TRY TO SAVE HIM? WHY EVEN TELL ME THIS **NOW**,
WHEN YOU'RE ABOUT TO GET WHAT YOU WANT.?

I TRIED.
SO HARD.

I WAS LOYAL TO YOU AFTER I **KNEW** YOU HAD LIED TO ME.

[redacted]

STILL WISH YOU WERE HERE

ISN'T IT A RAINA?

ISN'T THAT AWFUL...

[redacted]

WHAT ABOUT MY PARENTS?

FRAGILE, HUH ?

IF I GO...

...

IF I LEAVE.. WHAT WILL YOU DO?

..WHAT ABOUT SEP?

USE HAIMA!

YEAH. I GUESS SO.

BUT I DONT GET IT. WHY WOULD THE NAMEEATER CHOOSE SEP IN THE FIRST PLACE?

WHEN SEP APPEARED—

NOTHING FROM HIM.

DO EVERYTHING

MISTAKE.

YOU'VE MET LOTS OF HUMANS THAT CAME TO THIS WORLD. HAS THERE EVER BEEN ANOTHER LIKE SEP? NO POTENTIAL FOR MAGIC AT ALL?

I DON'T THINK SO

HUH.

HUH.

I NEED TO GO CHECK ON SOMETHING. BUT YOU HAVE TO PROMISE ME YOU WON'T MAKE A DECISION WITHOUT ME. DON'T GO ANYWHERE.

SWEAR IT.

KATE..

I NEED TO TALK TO KATE RIGHT AWAY !

AHEM.

HA

YOU KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO SAY, I EXPECT

ESSIE .

..WE MADE A PROMISE TO SET EVERYTHING RIGHT TOGETHER, DIDNT WE ?

I'LL BE YOUR CHAMPION

KATE, NORN, I NEED TO TALK TO YOU

EVERYTHING OKAY?

NO BUT THAT'S NOT IT

WILL YOU KEEP AN EYE ON HIM FOR ME?

HA THANKS MA'AM

OVER HERE OK, IT NEEDS TO BE PRIVATE

WHAT DID ESSIE SAY?

SHES A MESS SHE NEEDS HELP REAL BAD BUT HER PLANS ALWAYS SUCK

BUT I REALIZED SOMETHING.

OKAY

I NEED TO FILL YOU IN, BUT FIRST, NORN- DID THE ARCHIVIST EVER TELL YOU ANYTHING ABOUT PORTALS?

NOT MUCH, BUT..!

I JUST SO HAPPEN TO HAVE ACCESS TO EVERY FILE EVER WRITTEN ON THE SUBJECT!

AND KATE- DID YOU BRING YOUR WIREWORKING TOOLS?

TADAA!

SURE DID! IN CASE YOU NEEDED 'EM!

MY HEROES!

WHEW— OKAY THIS IS- DEFINITELY COMPLETELY NUTS

BUT-

LET ME FILL YOU IN ON THE WHOLE MESS

WE'RE GONNA GET SEP BACK

WHAT AM I DOING?

AND YOU WOULDN'T MAKE RAINA DO IT

HAHA- I KNEW YOU'D SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

OF COURSE

WHAT, IS THIS NOT GOOD ENOUGH?

YOU HAVE AN OFFICE FOR THIS MEETING?

NO THIS IS FINE IT ONLY THAT

I DON'T WANT ANYONE TO COME WITH ME ESPECIALLY NOT RANA

SINCE THERE'S NO WAY YOU KNOW THIS FOR SURE OF COURSE BUT

THINK TO

GO AHEAD

ABSOLUTELY NOT.

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET AWAY WITH IT.
WE STILL PROMISED TO SET IT RIGHT TOGETHER.
YOU CAN'T GET OUT OF IT.

MY GOD.

YOU RE AN AWFUL LISTENER

I SAID I WOULD FIGHT WITH YOU...

...AND I

LAUGH

THROW YOU AGAIN

HA-HA-HA!

AGAIN?

EVENTUALLY I WILL THROW YOU AGAIN

YOU'LL NEVER EXPECT IT

WANT'S TO DO

OKAY

HUH.

NOTHING IS—
STRANGE TO LAUGH AT A TIME LIKE THIS, ISNT IT? WHEN WE'RE ALL SO AFRAID

HA-
YES, YOU'RE RIGHT

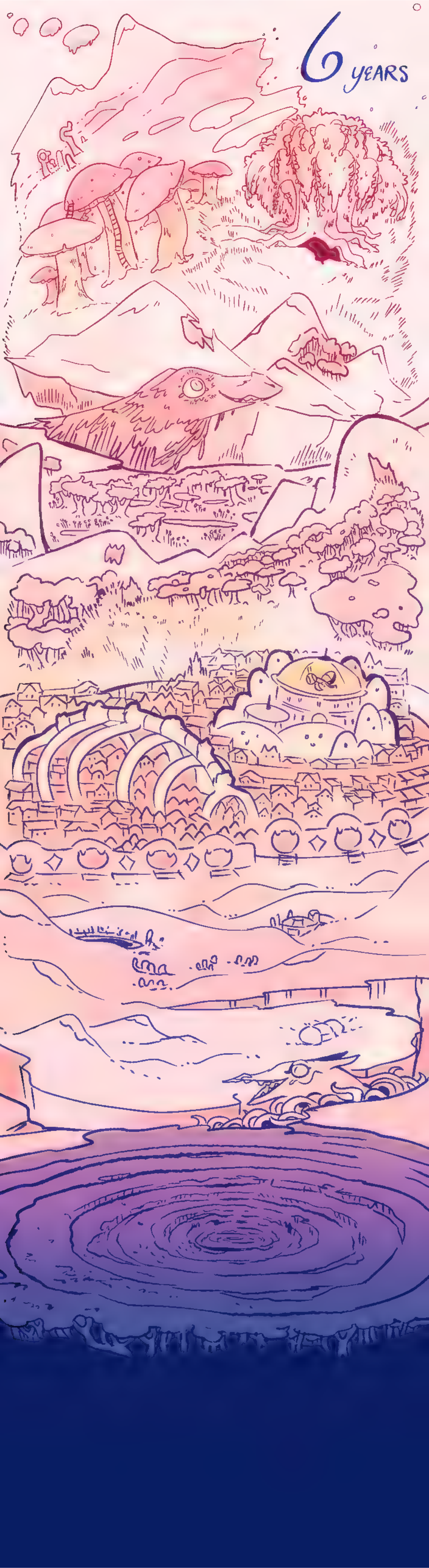
KRAK

KRAK

CRAK

CRAK

FLINCH


6 YEARS

I CAN'T WAIT TO TELL YOU WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON-

ESSIE-

WELL, I'LL WAIT TO TELL THE REAL YOU

IF YOU CAN HEAR ME-

I'M COMING

...

I AM COMING FOR YOU

HEY!!

IT'S DONE!

EVERYTHING GO OKAY?

NORN AND I DID OUR BEST I KNOW WE DONT HAVE TIME FOR ME TO MAKE IT BEAUTIFUL

THANK YOU

HOW DO WE KNOW IF IT WORKS?

WE DON'T

IT'S NOT DOING ANYTHING?

IT WONT UNTIL I SUMMON IT

HERE

RAINA, WHAT IF THAT WONT WORK IF I HAVE IT...?

IT'LL BE FINE

YOU RE THE ONE I WANT TO HAVE IT.

I WONT LEAVE YOU BEHIND. PROMISE

I WONT LEAVE YOU BEHIND EITHER. PROMISE'

DID YOU FEEL SOMETHING-

THAT.

CRAK

KRK

KEAK

CRAKK

CRK

CRK

CR

OH NO YOU DON'T!!

KATE, COME GRAB HIM, WILL YA?

YUP!

CRUNCH

LAST CHANCE TO WAKE UP FOR ME, SEP. I THINK IT'S ALL HAPPENING NOW

GOD HE'S LIGHT WE NEED TO FEED THIS KID!

I KNOW. HE DOESN'T SLEEP EITHER, HE'S A MENACE.

NOOO

NORA-

CRACK

CRACK

IT'S OKAY I THINK WE'RE OUT OF TIME ANYWAY

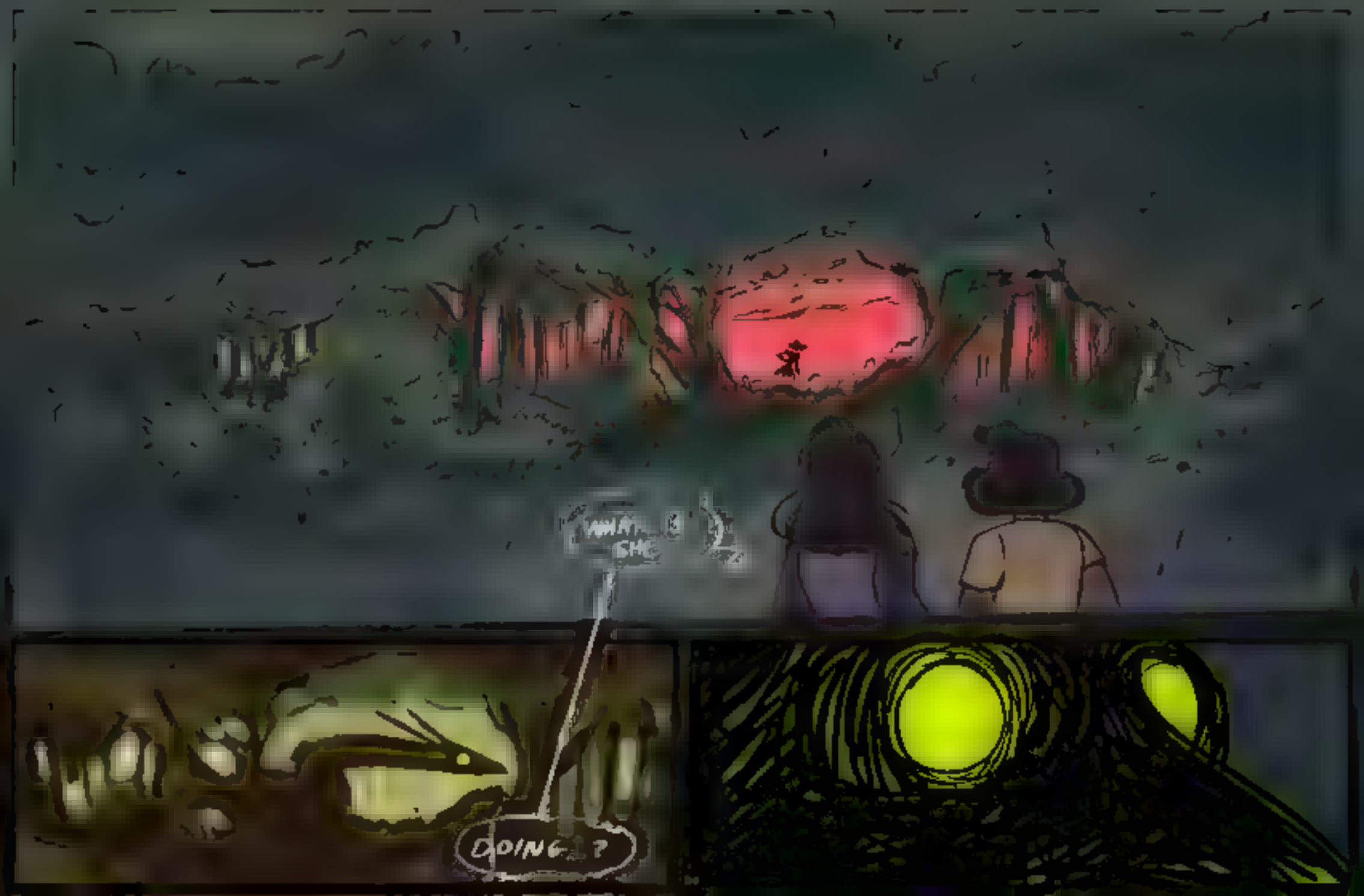
MOTHER SENDS HER LOVE KATE BUT SHE HAD TO BE BRIEF

THE ANTS ARE ON THE WAY, BUT EVEN FLYING WITHOUT REST IT WILL BE A FEW DAYS

AND. MY PLAN?

THE ARCHIVIST HAS A GIFT—

AH-


DOING?

SNAP

ESSIE

WELL?

THAT'S ALL OF THEM FOR NOW!

NOT TOO BAD

HOW LONG DO WE HAVE?

NOT LONG— I SUDDENLY CAN'T GET A GRIP ON HIM. I'M WORRIED HIM HAVING SEP CHANGES THINGS

EVERYONE— WE NEED TO FLEE OR FIGHT NOW.

I'M AFRAID THERE'S NO MORE TIME TO THINK IT OVER

WE'RE STAYING. ESSIE

I JUST NEED ONE THING

OF COURSE, RAINA. ...ANYTHING.

I'LL MAKE IT QUICK.

WITHOUT YOUR MAGIC, I AM POWERLESS

KRAK

EVEN THOUGH YOU SAID YOU MESSED UP, AND YOU'RE SORRY, YOU STILL HAVE ALL THE POWER OVER ME.

SO IF YOU'RE REALLY SORRY, AND YOU REALLY WANT TO CHANGE, YOU'LL LET ME DECIDE WHAT I WANT TO DO AND LISTEN TO MY PLAN. YOU DON'T GET TO CONTROL ME WHILE I HELP YOU.

UNLESS THAT'S HOW IT'S GONNA BE, IT MEANS NOTHING THAT YOU'RE SORRY.

KRA

WH— ESSIE—

RAINA, ONLY SOMEONE LIKE YOU COULD SEE WHAT I'VE DONE —

—AND SAY "YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIGURE EVERYTHING OUT ALONE ANYMORE," LIKE THAT.

OF COURSE I WILL LISTEN TO YOU. I SWEAR IT.

JEEZ

DONT BOW AT ME-

YOU'RE THE WORST AT BEING YELLED AT.

KNOWING YOU.

YOUR PARENTS MUST BE INCREDIBLE PEOPLE.

YEAH.

CRAK

CKRAK CRAK KRAK

I CAN FEEL IT TOO, RAINA, I— I FEEL LIKE I

THERE IS A

FEELING

TERRIBLE

THIS STORM

HAVE

FOR SO LONG BUT I THINK

BEEN HOLDING HIM

PRESSING CLOSED THE WOUND

IN THE GROUND

IN THE GROUND

THAT I CAN'T

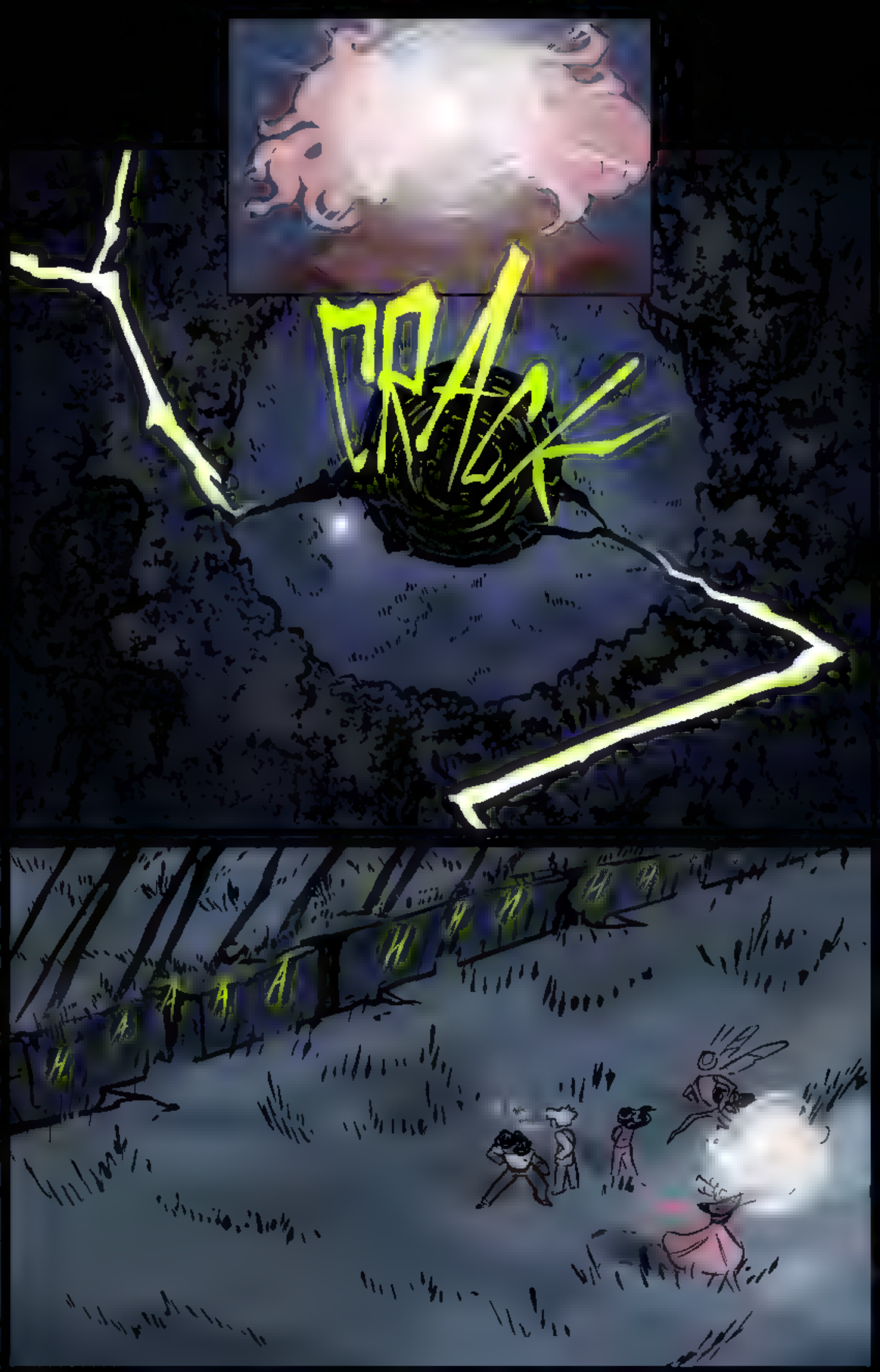
BUT HE

ESSIE?

IS SHE-

ESSIE?!

ESSIE-


HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA

STUPID.

THIS ISN'T HOW YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO DO IT.

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO LET HER COME TO YOU. SHE'S THE HERO

YOU WOULD

HAVE

ME

FOLLOW

YOUR RULES?

WHAT DO YOU OFFER ME IN RETURN, BOY?

NOTHING.

YOU WISH AND WISH FOR HER
YET SHE DOES NOT
COME.
WHY DOESN'T SHE ?

AM I TO GIVE YOU YOUR DREAMS AFTER ALL?

YOU WOULD NOT LIKE TO GO FETCH HER YOURSELF...?

WHAT...?

YOU MAY WAKE. AND BRING HER. TO ME. A FAVOR I OFFER

THERE HAS TO BE SOME KIND OF DECIDE

I DONT UNDERSTAND-

DECIDE NOW

NOW

NOW

NOW

NOW

NOW

NOW

NOW

IN MOMENTS WILL REND THROUGH

NOW

IN MOMENTS

SOON

SOON

NOW

NOW

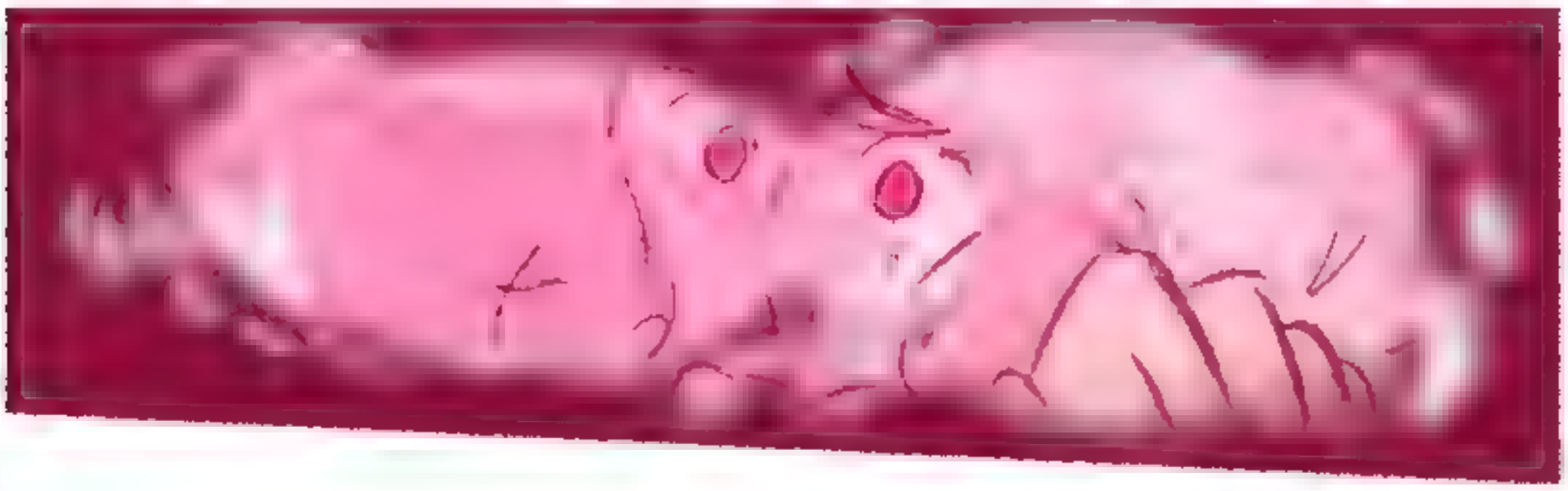
I'LL-

I'LL-

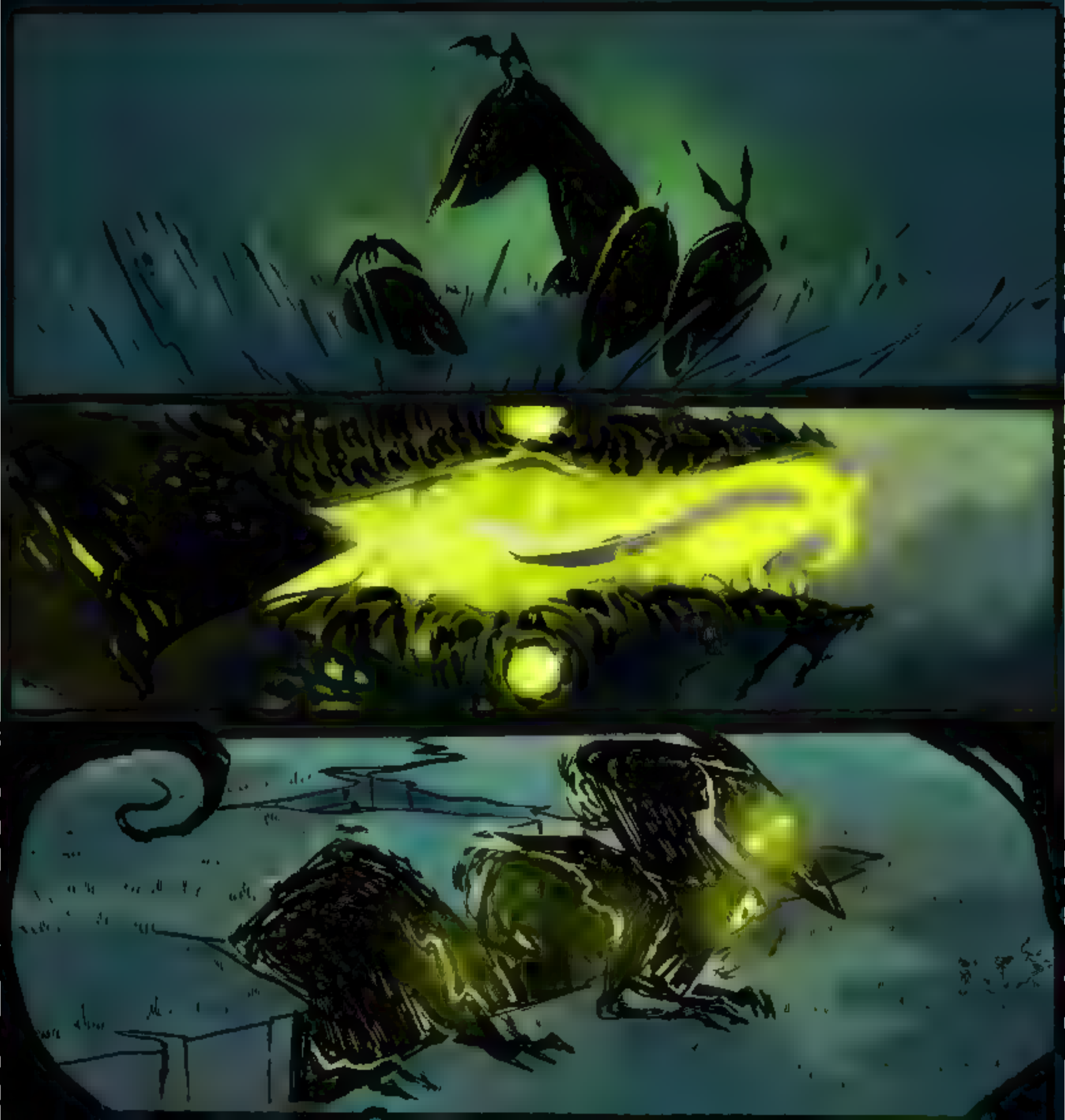
YOU SWEAR THAT I-

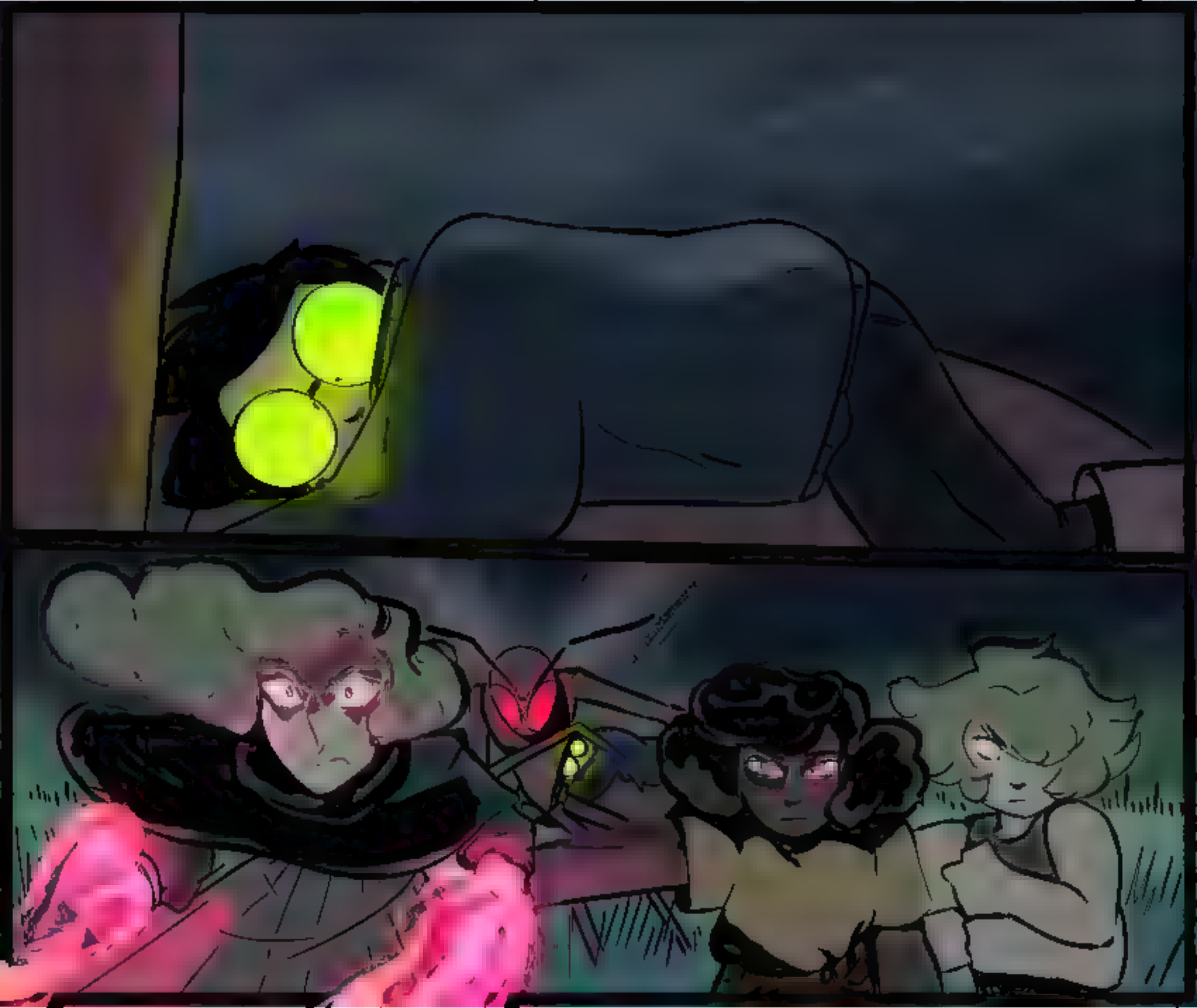
CHOOSE NOW

YES.



HE
WHAT





HELLO AGAIN

HEY—

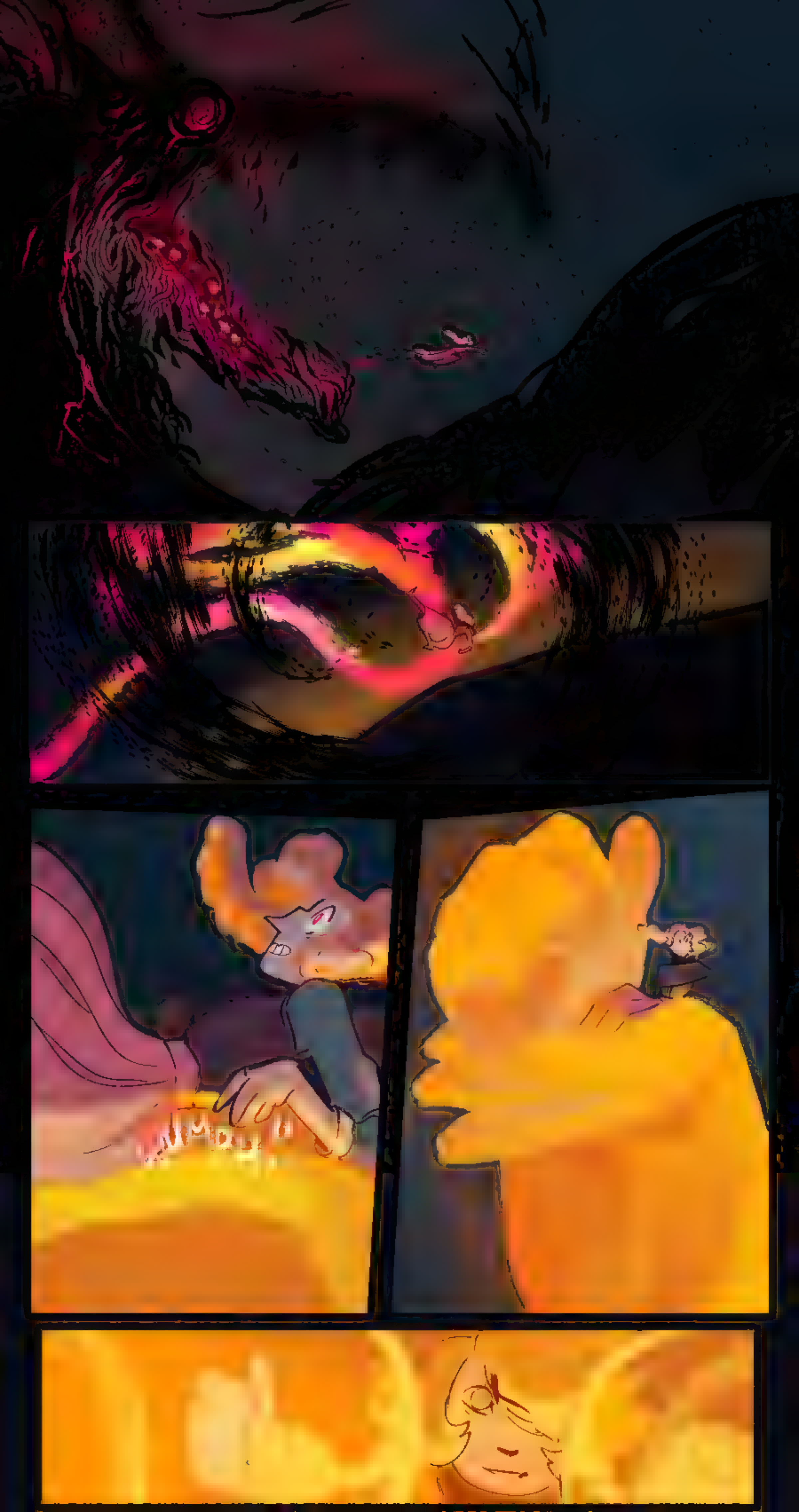
YOU ALRIGHT?

THIS—

THEY'RE ALL— ALL AT ONCE?

PERFECT

WOOF
DAMN



CLENCH

GASP

GASP

I DIDN'T SEE ESSIE WITH HER

ARENT YOU SICK OF ME BY NOW?

EVER

BE OVER

WHY CANT WE JUST KILL EACH OTHER?

THEN EVERYONE WOULD BE SAFE FROM US!!

WE- OOF

YOU'RE OKAY?

I WON'T LET HIM TAKE YOU

I KNOW

WHAT...

SO FAST.

PLEASE. I WANT TO KEEP FIGHTING.

I DONT WANT TO LET GO YET.

YO!!?

PUH

PUSH

YO!!! WHAT

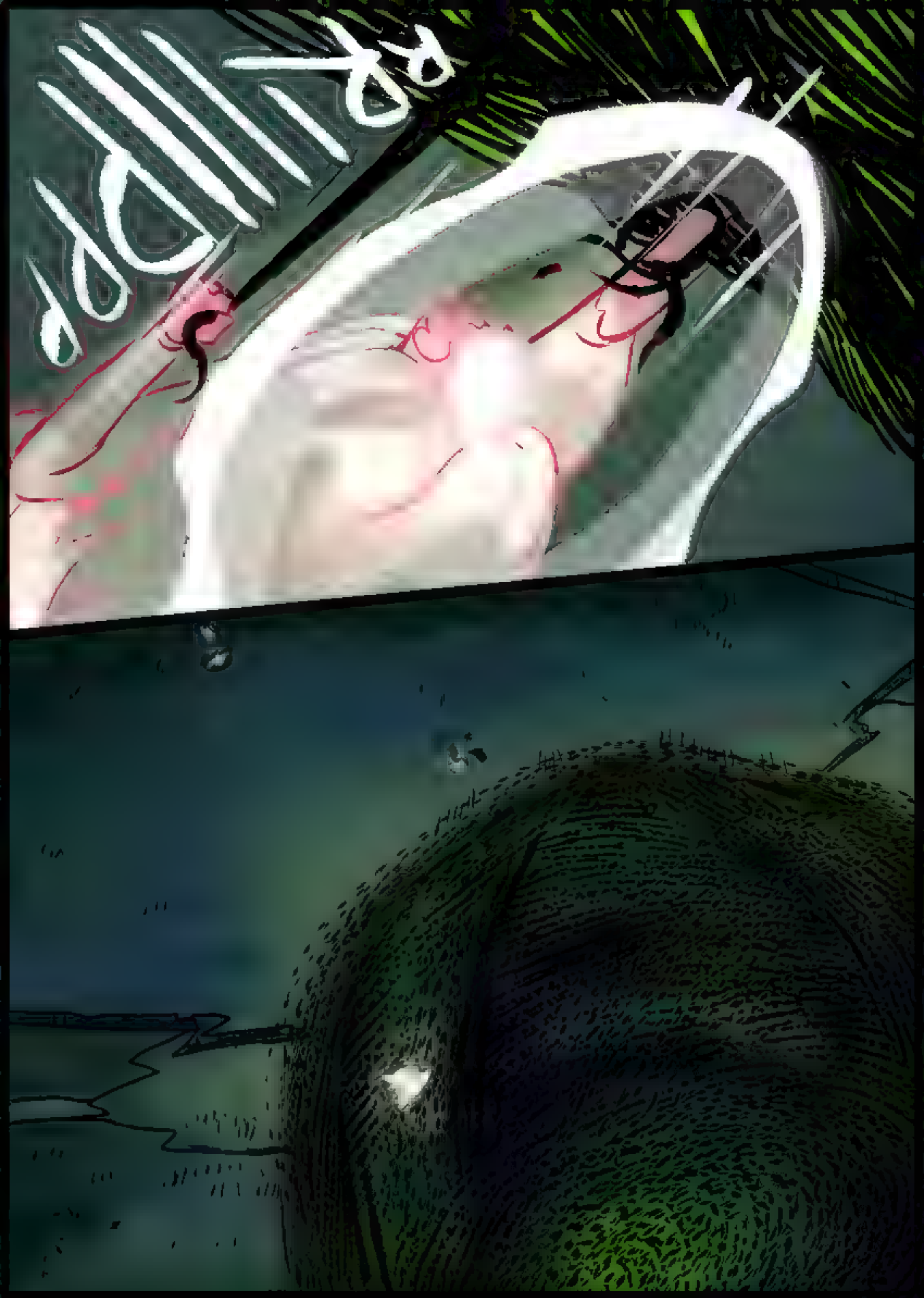
NO

FLICKER

RUWA

WHO?

Sep
RAINA..!!
RAINA!!
..I'M BACK?
OW- THAT'S TOO- THAT'S TOO BRIGHT
THAT HURTS.
BUT IT'S RAINA-
...
Sep?
IF I COULD JUST GET RID OF THAT THING
is it you?
Sep?



WHOOO

KEEPING HIM ASLEEP AND NOW THIS IT'S HAVING SO MUCH TROUBLE CONTROLLING HIM WHY?

SOMETHING POWERFUL ENOUGH TO DESTROY THE WORLD, BUT IT CANT OVERPOWER HIM . . . ?

SEP MUST BE A PRECIOUS RESOURCE, THEN.

AND THAT MEANS...

I WAS RIGHT

FLASH

CRACK

I NEED YOU TO TAKE THAT CHAIN OFF

LUNGE

TOO FAST!

I HAVE TO

CRACK

SOMEHOW, I IMAGINED THIS WOULD BE JUST ONE MORE DAMN MONSTER TO FIGHT.

BUT I WAS WRONG ABOUT THAT. IT DOESN'T WANT TO FIGHT ME, THAT WOULD BE TOO HONEST.

IT WANTS US BOTH TO JUST STAND STILL AND QUIETLY GET EATEN.

THAT'S HOW THIS THING THINKS.

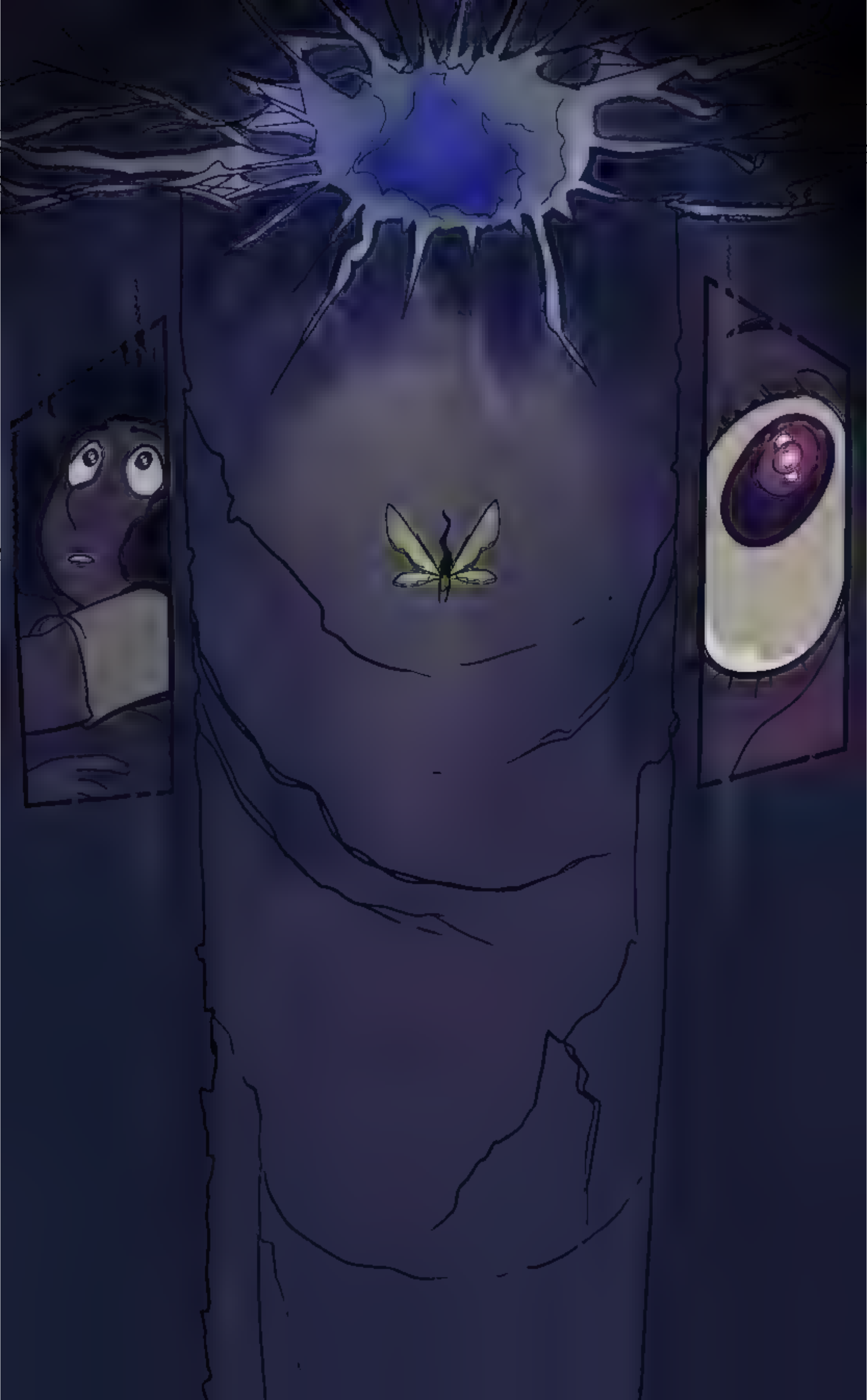
WE'RE JUST USEFUL MEAT TO IT. IT'S NOT GOING TO EXPECT STRATEGY.

ARE YOU GOING TO ATTACK ME?

C'MON. SEE IF YOU'RE GOOD ENOUGH TO FIGHT WITH ME. I'M THINKING ABOUT THIS LIKE YOU WOULD. YOU SAID I DIDN'T HAVE TO DO THIS BY MYSELF.

CRAACK
CRACK K
CK CK H

BOOM



RAINA AND SEP FELL

AND FELL

NOW?

I THINK SO.

SHE'S NOT GONE. YOU SAID YOU WERE GOING TO TRUST HER, DIDN'T YOU?

YOU NEED TO GET READY TO GO.

WE'RE WAITING FOR HER SIGNAL.

THIS IS A LITTLE PORTAL, ISN'T IT?

HOW DID YOU-

I MEAN, IN MY TIME MAKING CHARMS FOR RAINA, I WAS ABLE TO STUDY YOUR MAGIC MORE CLOSELY THAN ANYONE EVER HAS.

AND NORN HAD ACCESS TO THE RESEARCH YOU STARTED FROM.

IT ACTUALLY WAS PRETTY EASY TO MAKE A SISTER CHARM TO THIS ONE.

YOU MADE A PATHWAY.

RAINA'S ON THE OTHER SIDE, WAITING FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT. THE NAME EATER DOESN'T JUST WANT TO EAT THE WORLD, OR HE WOULDN'T BOTHER WITH SEP.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

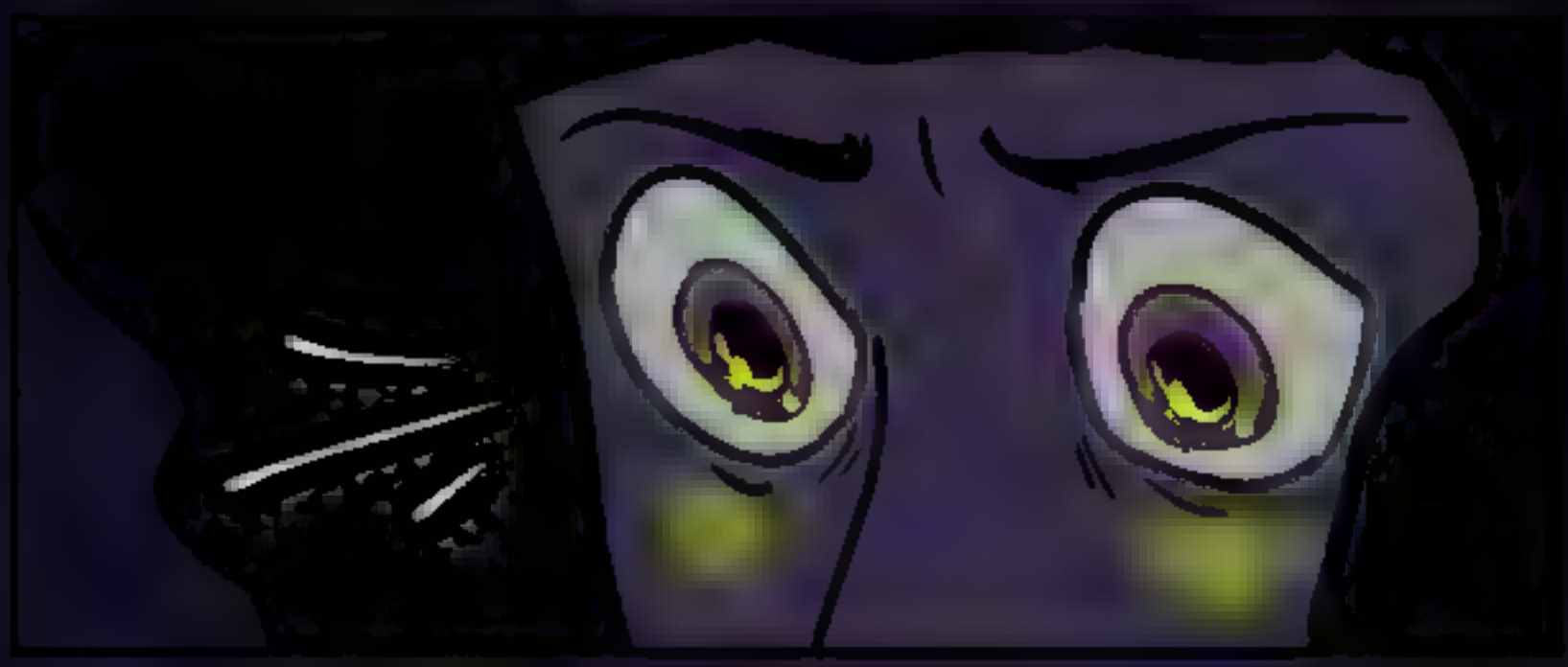
IF RAINA CAN'T GET HIM BACK THAT'S PROBABLY... YOU KNOW. THAT'S THE END OF US.

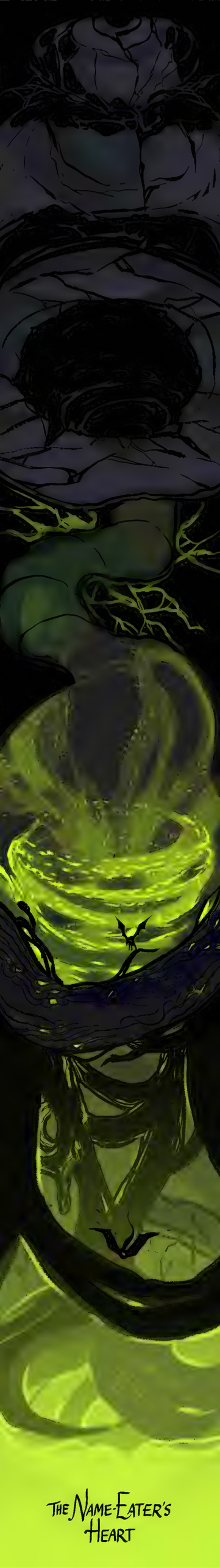
AND EVERYBODY HERE.

AND EVERYBODY IN THE WORLD WE CAME FROM, TOO.

?!

BLINK




THE NAME-EATER'S HEART

HSST

-GOTTA KEEP MY BRACELET OUT OF SIGHT.

CRACK

KRACK

PULSE

LAND

I DON'T WANT TO SEE WHAT'S UNDER THAT HOOD.

PLEASE PLEASE DON'T LET ME SEE IT.

SLUMP

You Have What You Asked For, Boy

Your Hero Is Here

Heh.

So, Defeat Me

THEN LETS BEGIN

OH GOD. BUT I NEED TO STALL CANT—

-MOVE

KRAAK

I NEED TO REACH HIM.

WRITHE

NO- NO-

STEP

STEP

STEP

STEP

SHUDDER

HE SEIZED THE CORNER OF THE WORLD IN HIS TEETH!

AND BEGAN TO REND

HE'S OPENING THE GATE.
IT'S NOW OR NEVER, RAINA.
PLEASE.

I CAN FEEL HER.
I HOPE SHE KNOWS
THIS IS IT.
WE'RE OUT OF
TIME.

PLEASE

PLEASE

PLEASE

PLEASE

PLEASE

IT WOULD BE FITTING
TO DIE WAITING FOR
SOMEONE ELSE TO ACT

TO
LOSE YOU
ALL AS I
WAIT FOR
THE END-

I AM WITH YOU.

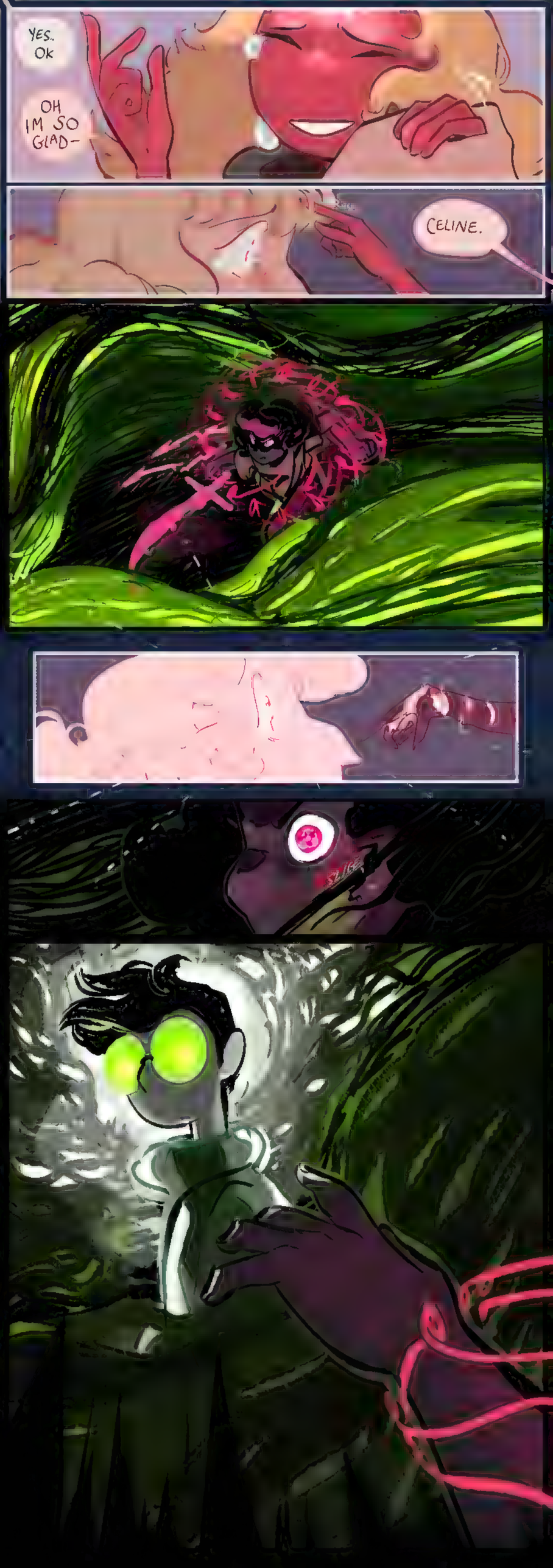
IF WE CAN STILL WAIT THEN I WILL WAIT WITH YOU. I HAVE THINGS - TO SAY THAT - IF YOU ARE —

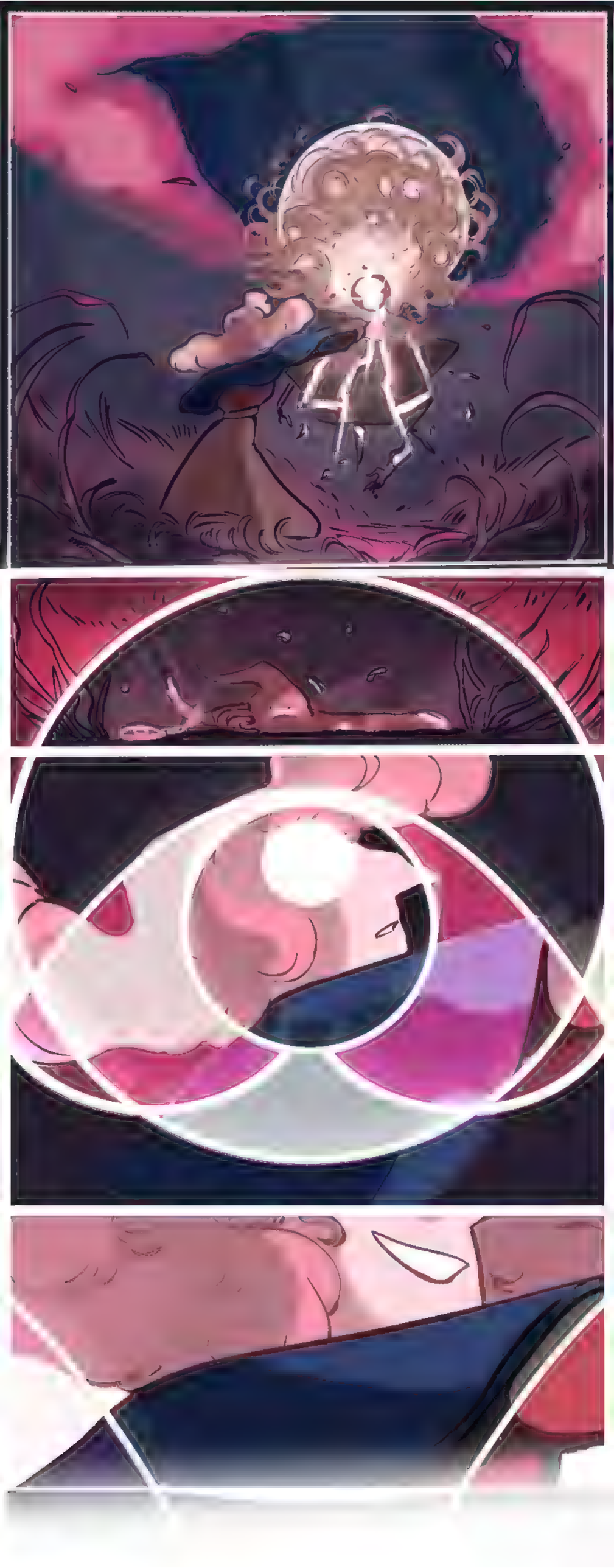
YEAH.

TRYING TO BE LIKE YOU.. - BEING A LITTLE BIT HUMAN HAS BEEN THE GREATEST JOY OF MY LIFE. YOU GAVE ME THAT.

BUT THIS — THIS IS JUST A DOLL. I WANT TO SHOW YOU WHAT IT IS THAT HAS LOVED YOU.

OK?


YES. OK
OH IM SO GLAD-
CELINE.



THIS CHARM IS A PORTAL

YOU CAN KEEP THOSE OPEN, CAN'T YOU? I NEED YOU TO DO THIS FOR ME.

PLEASE

I SEE YOU— I CAN SEE YOU. JUST REACH OUT A LITTLE MORE COME ON-

FOR ME, SEP.

YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL

AH-

BUT ESSIE-

WE'RE OUT OF TIME!

RAINA'S CALLING!

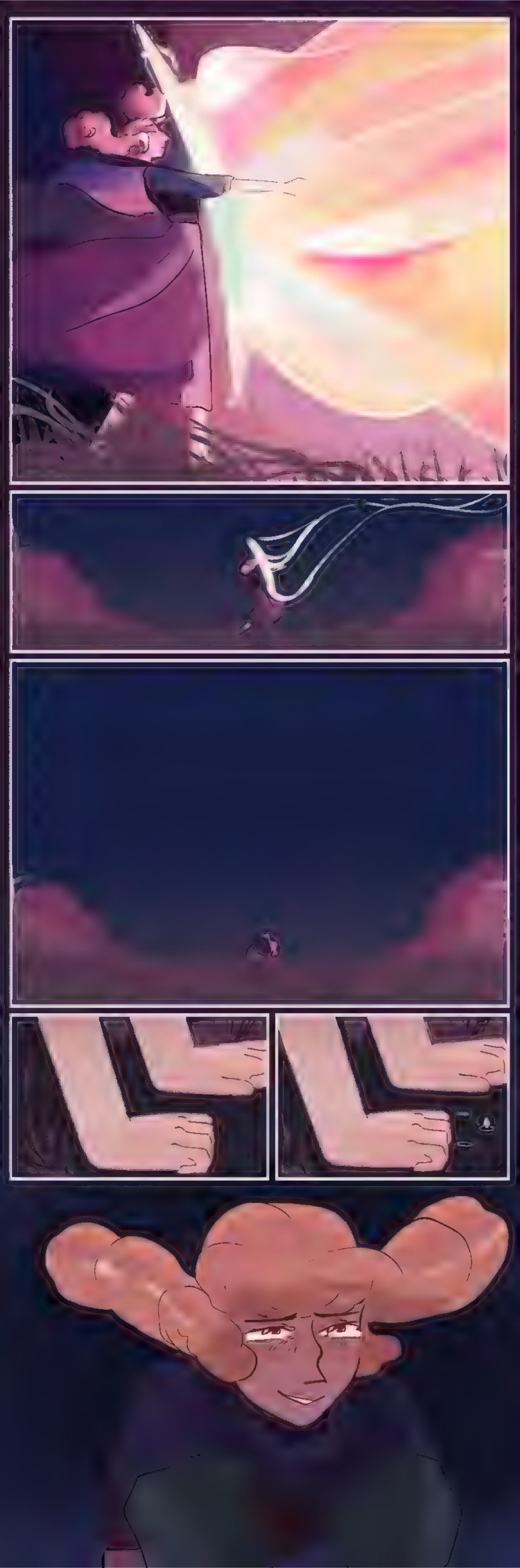
SHOW THEM THE ESSIE I KNOW.

AND COME BACK, SO I CAN TELL YOU—

SO I CAN SHOW YOU WHAT IT IS THAT HAS LOVED YOU, TOO

NOD

GO



SHATTER
OH!
FINALLY.

TWO PORTALS, WITH ONE BOY, HOLDING THEM BOTH OPEN.

THE MAGIC FELT LIKE PRESSURE.
THE MAGIC FELT LIKE WEIGHT.

THE MAGIC FELT LIKE BEING CHEWED.

WITH AN EMPTY WRIST, WEAPONS BROKEN,
RAINA HELD ON

I AM HERE
NAME
EATER

I THOUGHT YOUR REAL FORM WAS DEAD

PSEUDO-ANTHEA

WHY DIDN'T I KILL

I SHOULD HAVE SMOTHERED YOU IN THE NEST

THE END

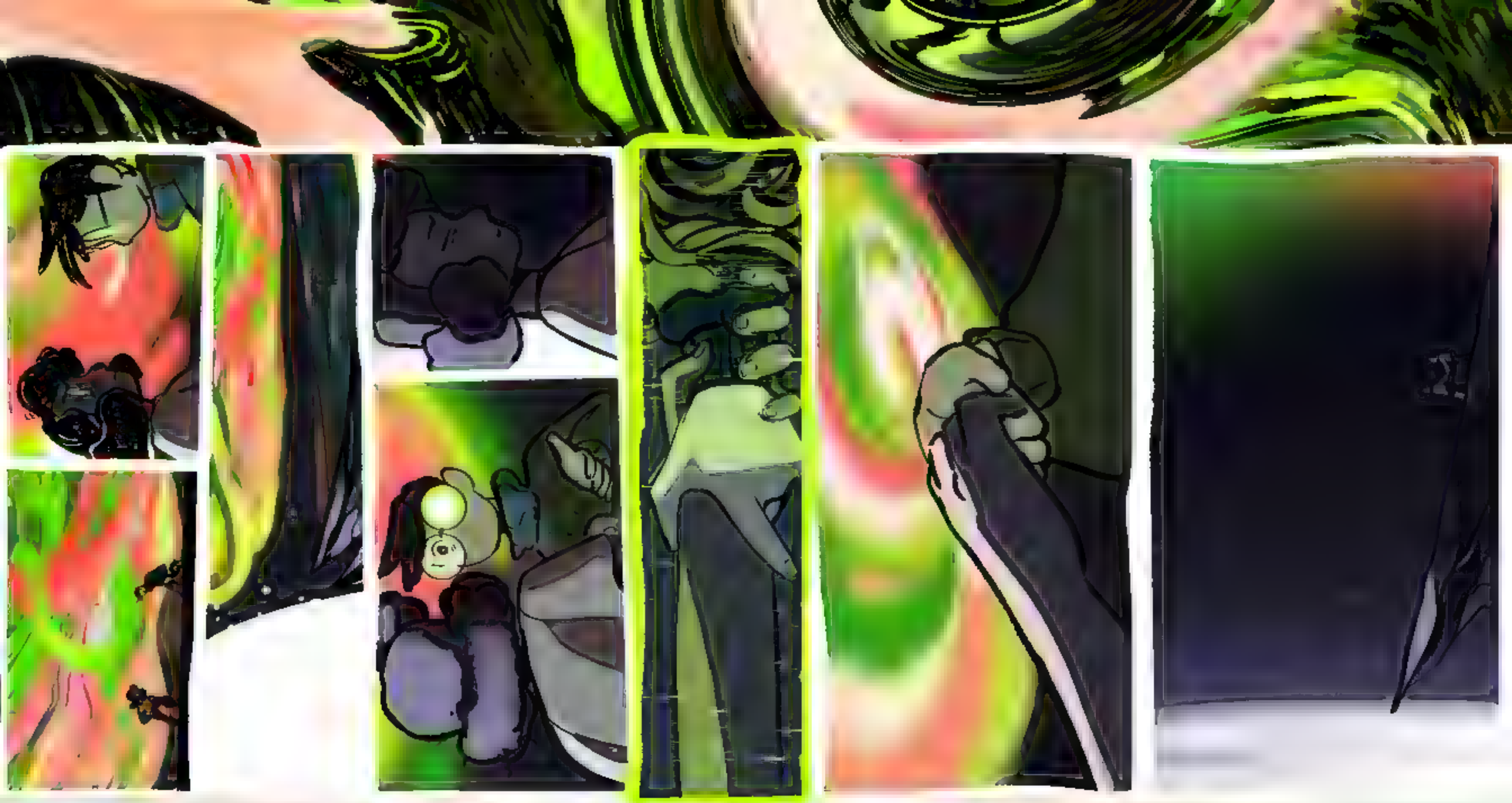
SHATTER

GASP
GASP

WAIT-

WHO AM I LOOKING AT NOW?

IS THAT HIM OR YOU?



SEP-THEY'RE GOING INTO THE PORTAL.

WE CAN'T LET THEM GET TO EARTH- WE CAN'T.

UNLESS THIS ISN—

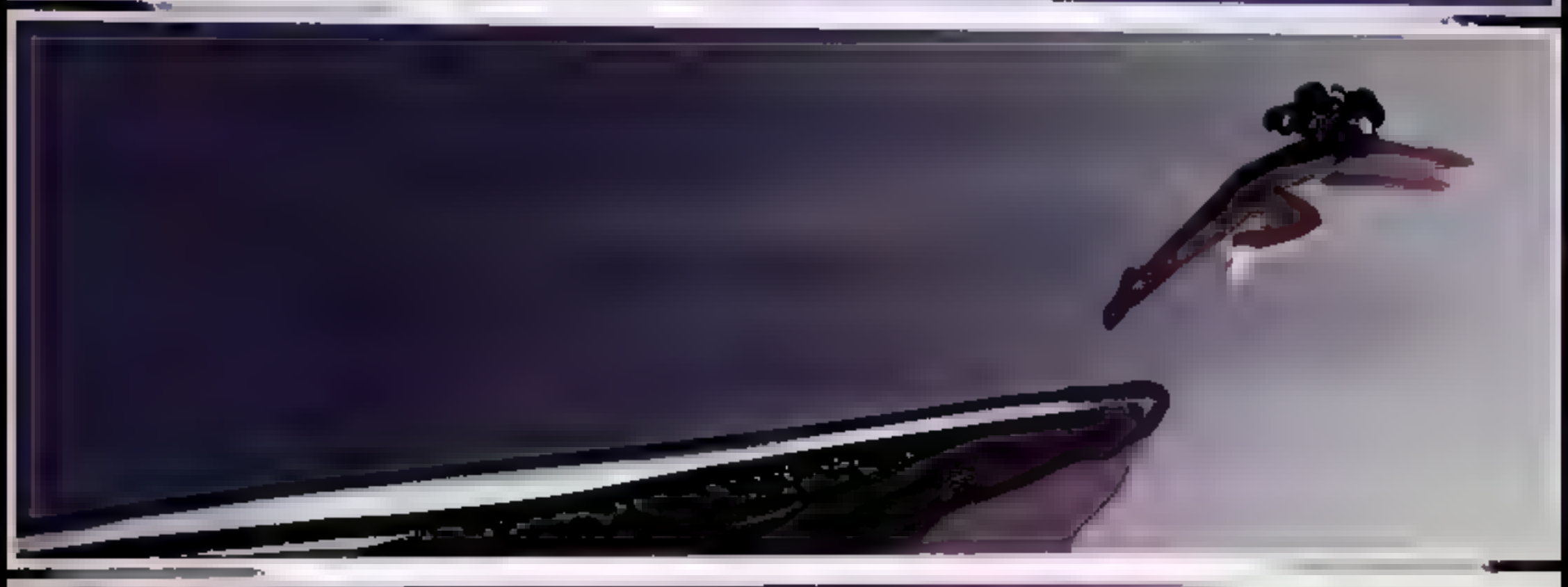
PULL

PULL

SORRY

PUSH

NO!



NOT WITHOUT ME - DON'T YOU DARE.
SORRY
I DIONT KNOW WHAT ELSE TO DO
I NEVER WANTED TO BRING YOU
TO MY HOUSE

GROAN..

SEP-

WHERE-

OH.

THIS ISN'T A REAL PLACE

BUT-

YOU BROUGHT US ALL HERE.

THIS IS YOUR HOUSE?

THUD

Sob

DRIP

DRIP

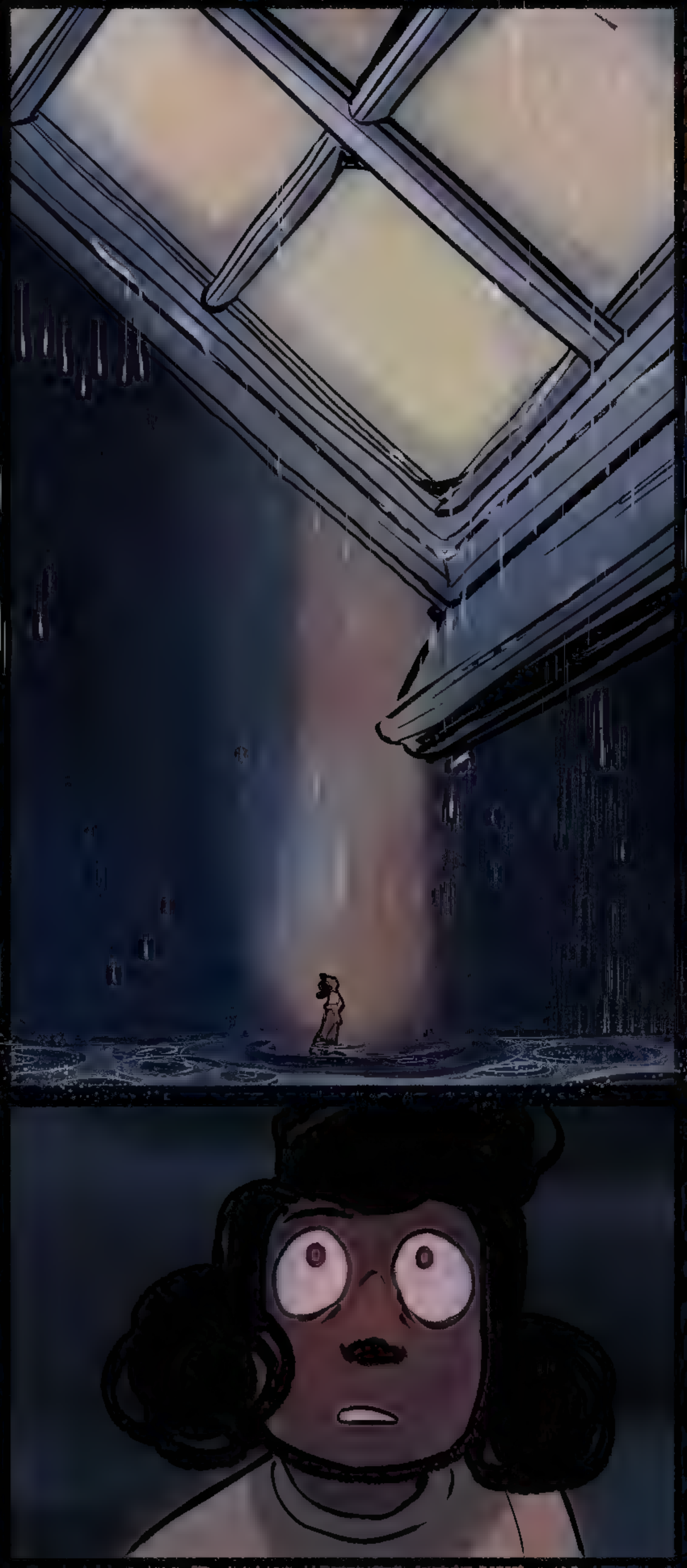
DRIP

WAIL

SOB

GASP

SPLASH

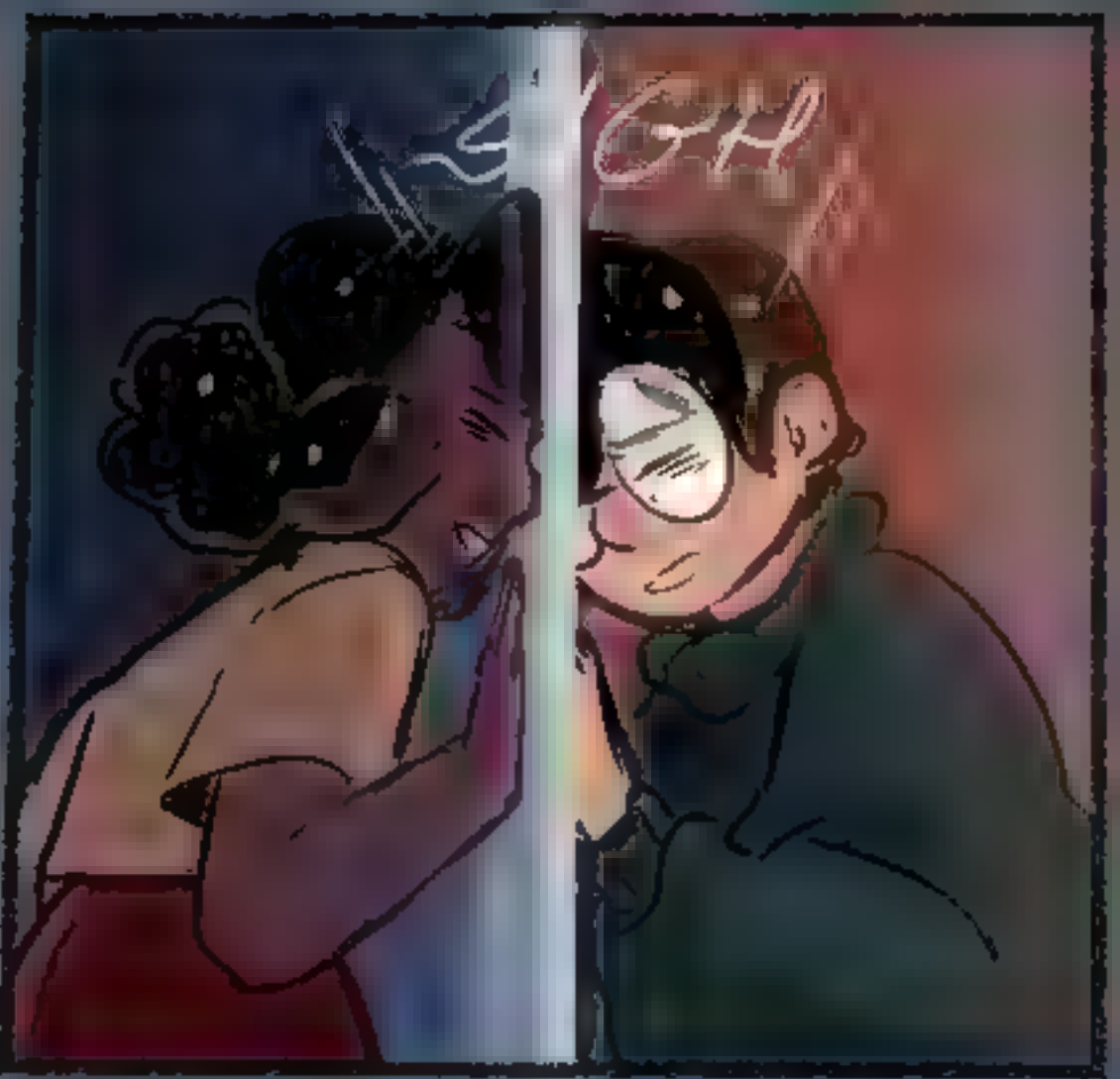


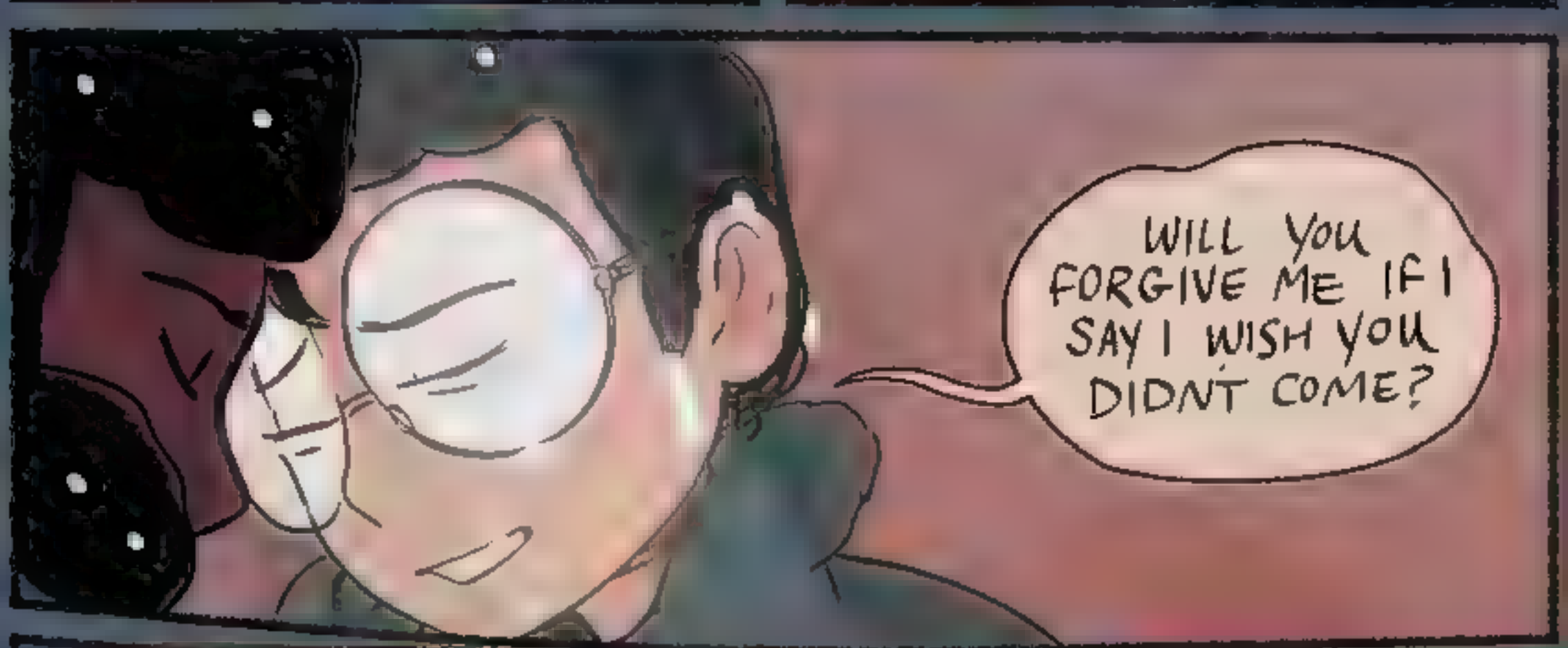
Splish

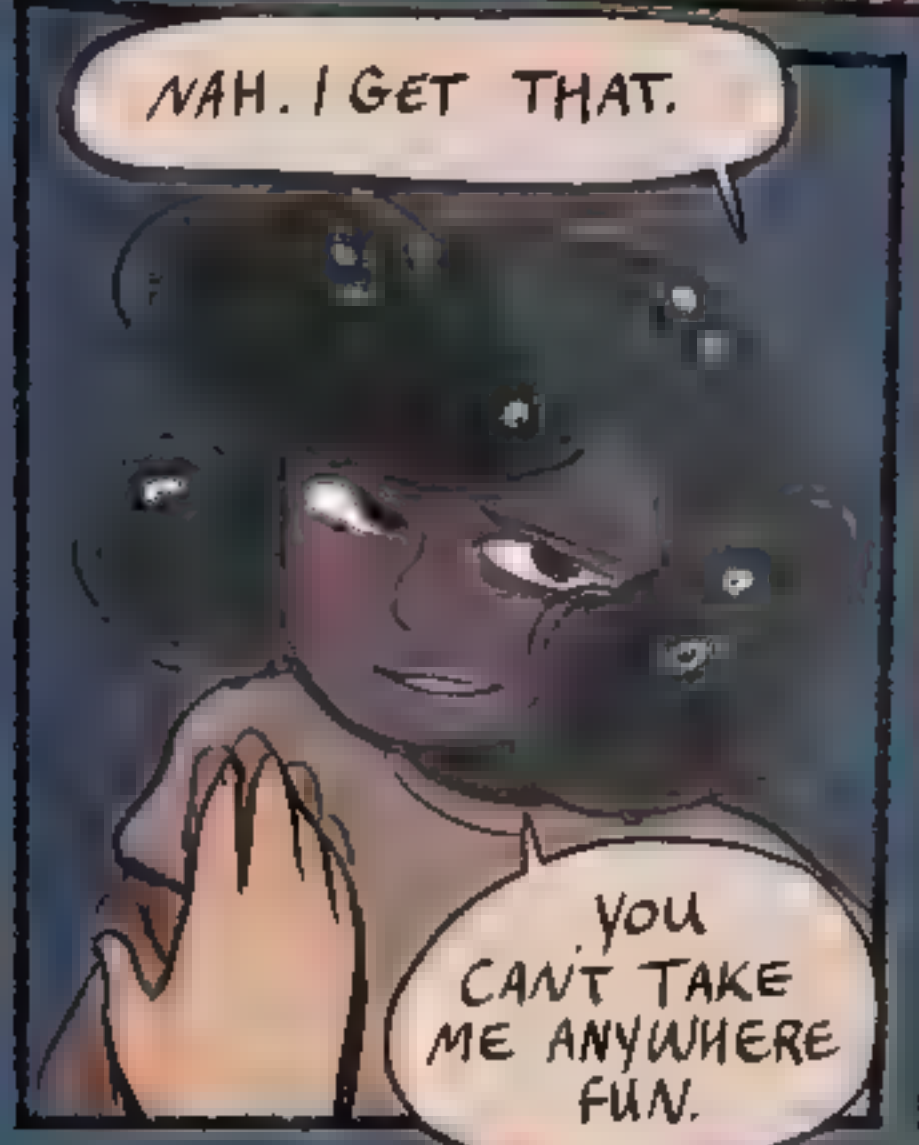
Splish

RAINA

HEY, KID




WILL YOU FORGIVE ME IF I SAY I WISH YOU DIDNT COME?


NAH. I GET THAT.
YOU CANT TAKE ME ANYWHERE FUN.

GOD

I MISSED TALKING TO YOU.

I MISSED YOU, TOO-

HEY-

hey..

SEP-
WHAT IS ALL THIS? WHAT DID YOU DO?

...

THE ONLY THING I COULD THINK OF.

YOU DEFINITELY FIGURED OUT WHAT I CAN DO.

yeah.

THE NAME EATER FIGURED ME OUT, TOO. HE GOT IN MY HEAD, OPENED ME UP LIKE A PORTAL. HE'S— CUNNING, Y'KNOW?

BUT WITHOUT ME TO KEEP THE PORTALS OPEN, THEY'D COLLAPSE ON HIM, SAME WITH MY MIND. THE WORLD IN YOUR HEAD - OR MINE - MUST BE KINDA LIKE A REAL PLACE, THEN. SAME RULES.

SO HE WANTS TO GO TO THE HUMAN WORLD, BUT HE'S ONLY EVER SEEN MY, MEMORIES. SO— IT WASNT HARD TO TRICK HIM, ESPECIALLY WHILE ESSIE WAS RIGHT THERE. HE'S HERE FOR REAL. ALL OF HIM. SO—

THIS IS MY DREAM. MY MEMORY. MY MIND. IF I DESTROY THIS PLACE, THAT'S THE END OF HIM.

DRIP

DRIP

DRIP

NOW- NOW ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS GET YOU OUT OF HERE

THEN I'LL, UM,

GET ON WITH IT.

IF I CAN GET YOU AWAY FROM THEM, THEN IT'LL ALL MEAN SOMETHING.

AND-

AND..

IF WE WIN, I'LL SEE HIS EYES LOOKING BACK AT ME IN THE MIRROR FOREVER.

SO IT'S OK.

...

RAINA, CAN YOU SAY SOMETHING?

HOWL

SEP! WHAT DOES THE ROOM I'M IN LOOK LIKE?

WHAT? UHM-

PERFECT. THANKS

GRAB

AUGH!

OW

HNNNN

ESSIE...?

RAINA

IT's YOU

OH
WE HAVE TO
ACT VERY
FAST.

SHE'S IN SUCH PAIN...

.THE NAMED.

AND THE NAME EATER IS A BEAST INSIDE HIS OWN BELLY. I GUESS I UNDERSTAND HOW THAT FEELS

SHE'S BEEN FIGHTING FOR SO LONG I DIDNT EVEN HAVE MY OWN NAME UNTIL I MET HUMANS FOR THE FIRST TIME. SHE'S GOT ALL THE MAGIC. I'M JUST A- THING. MAYBE A PERSON.

I'M JUST ESSIE

SEP— LOOK OUT THE WINDOW.
Do YOU SEE THEM?

IN THIS
WINDOWS

people
ALL THOSE HOUSES. JUST LIKE THE ONE WE'RE IN...
ALL THOSE PEOPLE... IF YOU HADN'T STOPPED ME, I'D HAVE-
RAINA, I FOUND YOUR HOUSE NOT HERE. IN THE REAL WORLD BUT IT WAS EMPTY.
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK. BUT MY REAL HOUSE NEVER GOT PULLED OUT OF EARTH. THIS PLACE IS JUST MY MEMORY.
WHAT IF YOUR PARENTS ARE IN ONE OF THOSE HOUSES OUT THERE?
YOU'RE IN THE BELLY OF THE WHALE, SO YOU MAKE A SHELTER. THAT'S WHAT THIS FEELS LIKE, ANYWAY.

SO YOUR ORIGINAL PLAN WAS TO HAVE US TAKE YOUR PLACE.

TO TAKE ON YOUR MAGIC - YOURS AND HIS - AND JUST TRY TO KILL EACH OTHER.

YOU REALIZED HUMANS HAD THIS STRONG POTENTIAL FOR MAGIC AND THAT'S HOW YOU DECIDED TO PUT AN END TO THIS

I DON'T GET IT. IT DOESN'T - WHAT'S IN IT FOR HIM?

HE WANTED TO ESCAPE THIS WORLD - AND -

...and the chance to eat me alive...

I WISH I COULD UNDERSTAND HOW I WAS THINKING BACK THEN, BUT I -

NO

HOW WAS THE POWER TRANSFER SUPPOSED TO WORK?

A PIECE OF YOU IN ME, RAINA

AND A PIECE OF ME IN YOU.

I ONLY HAVE TO WAKE IT UP

THAT'S ALL YOU HAVE TO DO?

YES

BUT RAINA, LOOK-

BEND DOWN, I CAN'T REACH

SEE? SEE WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO YOU AND ME?

DRIP

I SEE

DRIP

DRIP

CRACK

SEP-

HEY-

CRACK

HEY.

WATER'S RISING

THE NAME EATER'S GONNA TAKE OVER PRETTY SOON.

THERE'S ALMOST NO BARRIER LEFT BETWEEN HIM AND ME. ANYWAY, HE'S BEEN IN HERE ALMOST THE WHOLE TIME YOU AND I HAVE KNOWN EACH OTHER.

SO

WHAT DO YOU THINK, KID?

WANNA BECOME DEMONS TOGETHER?

COME HERE.

HEY WHEN, UM-

WHEN WE GET HOME DO YOU WANNA COME OVER?

WE HAVE A REALLY SMALL YARD, BUT THERE'S A TRAMPOLINE BACK THERE

AND IN MY ROOM I HAVE A TOP BUNK BED SO I CAN TOUCH THE CEILING

HA- AND A SWORD

YEAH, AND MY DAD MADE ME THIS GIANT TOY-

YOUR DAD MADE THAT?

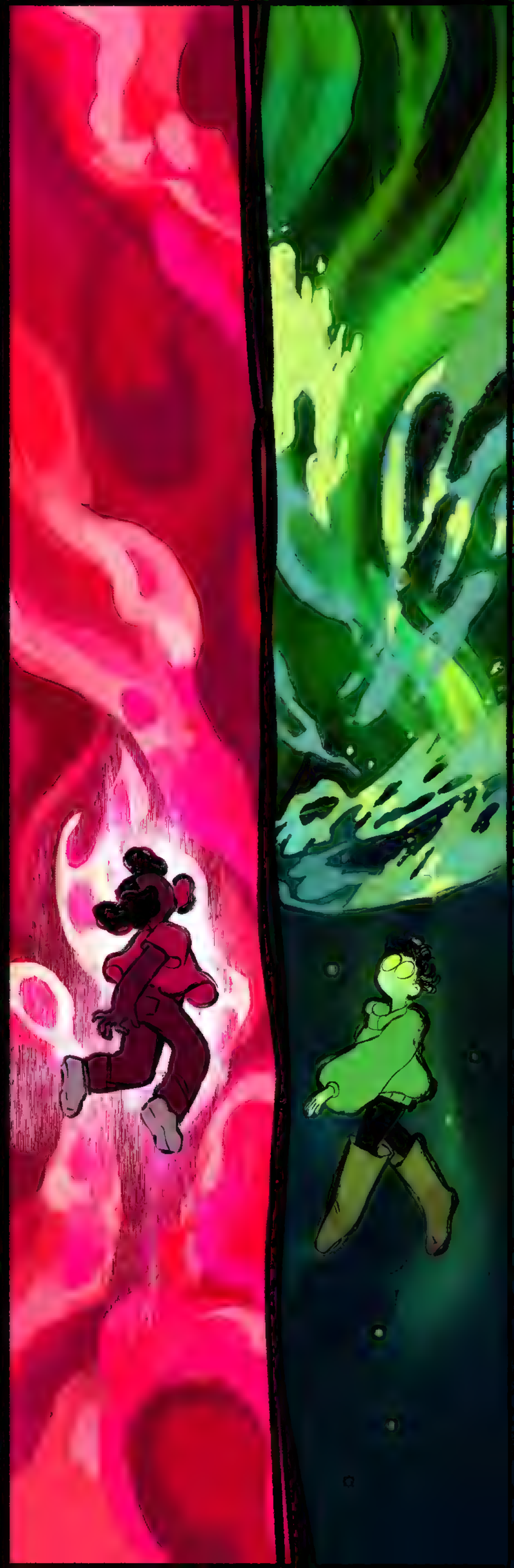
MM-HM- HE'S A REALLY GOOD COOK, TOO, AND MY MOM MAKES HOT CHOCOLATE WITH SPICY PEPPER STUFF IN IT

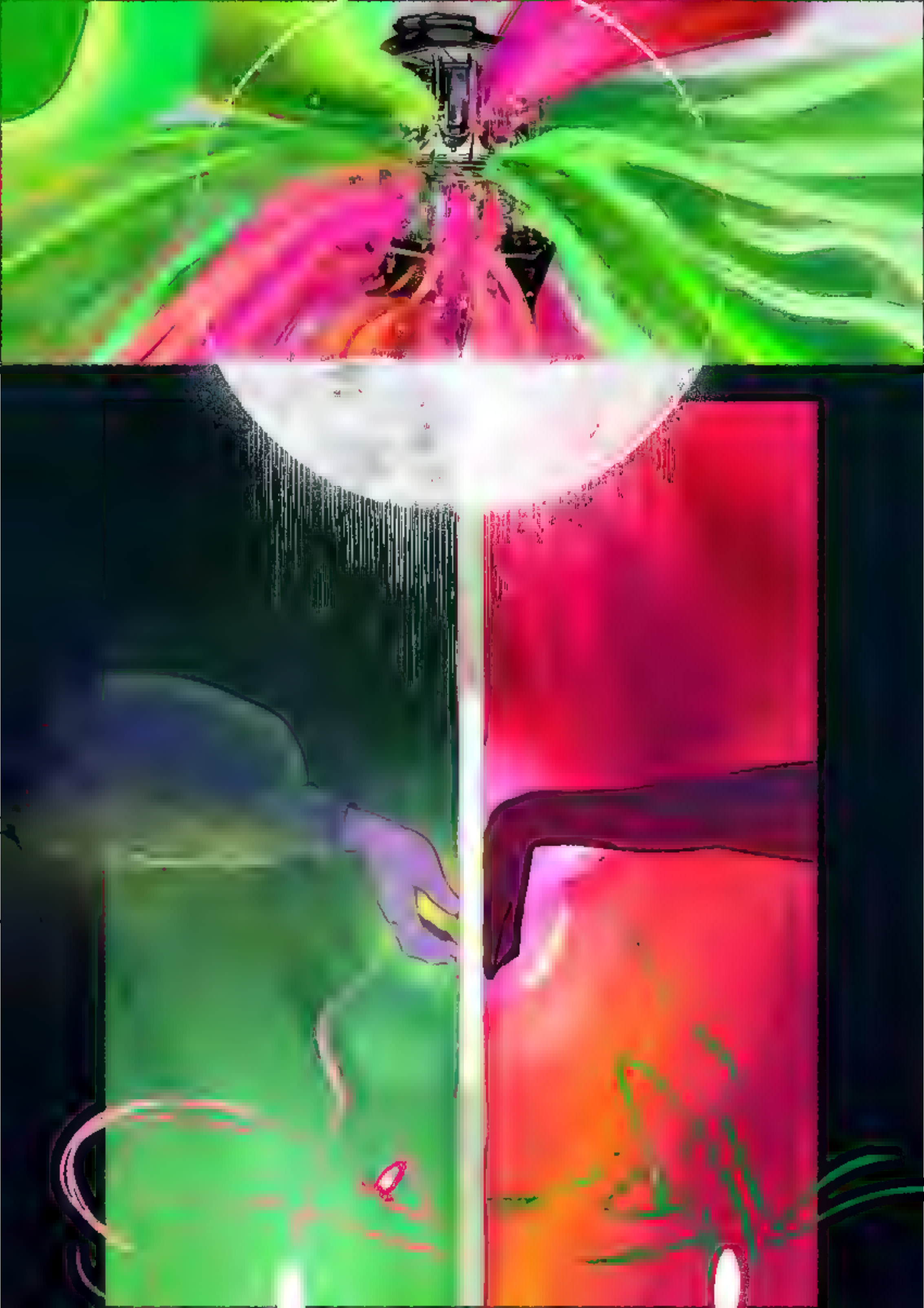
WOW..

READY, ESS?

No- THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL—

WHAT ARE YOU MADE OF?





SCREAM

flash/photosensitve warning

MAYBE HE'LL GET TIRED
IF HE FALLS ASLEEP I'LL BE
BUT IF HE REALIZES I LOCKED MY DOOR HE'LL BE MAD
AS LONG AS HE DOESNT SEE ME
IF HE DOESNT KNOW IM HOME
I CAN HIDE

I WISH HE WOULD DIE

NO-
IT'S HAPPENING AGAIN-
HE'S GOING TO EAT US
KILL HIM

PUSH

HURRY!

HE'LL EAT YOU

HURRY

HURRY

ONCE UPON A TIME
THERE WERE TWO CHILDREN
AND TWO GODS

NO—
WAIT—

THERE WERE TWO PARENTS
AND TWO CHILDREN?

WAIT—

THE CHILDREN WANTED
BUT THE
NEEDED THE POWER OF
THE GODS

THE GODS WERE HONEST.
"OUR POWER IS A TRAP."
THEY SAID.

"IF YOU TAKE IT
YOU HAVE TO BECOME JUST LIKE US."

DESPERATELY,
THE CHILDREN
REACHED OUT THEIR
HANDS AND TOOK
THE NAMES OF
GODS AS THEIR
OWN.

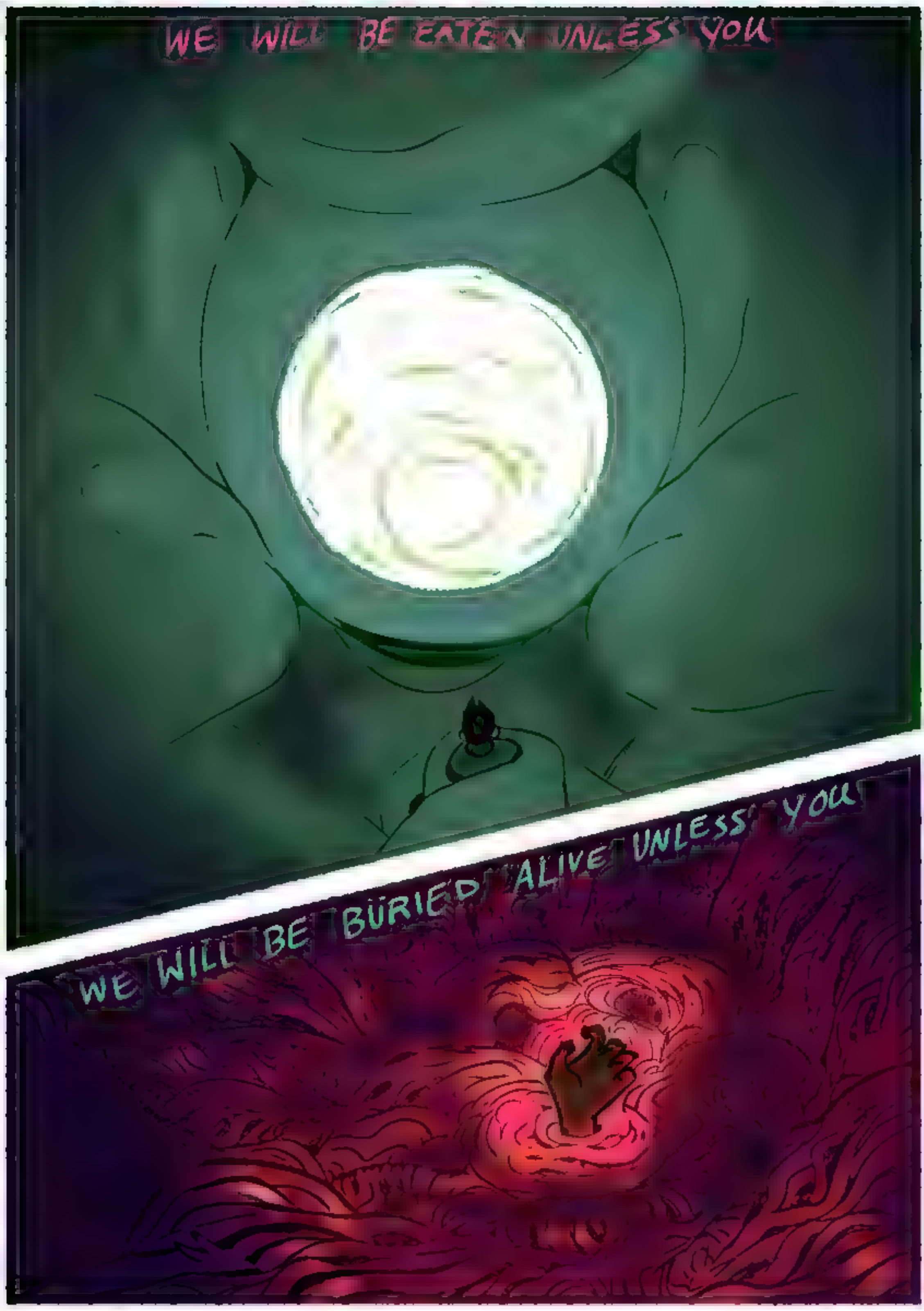
AND AFTER THAT,
EVERYTHING WAS
THE SAME AS IT
HAD ALWAYS
BEEN.

SAME THING AGAIN, SAME THING FOREVER
SAME THING AGAIN, SAME THING FOREVER

SAME THING AGAIN, SAME THING FOREVER
SAME THING AGAIN, SAME THING FOREVER

IT WILL HAPPEN AND
HAPPEN AND
NEVER STOP AND
THIS TIME, YOU WILL BE THE
ONE DOING IT

THE CYCLE THAT KEEPS THE WORLD SPINNING IS CALLED THE HUNGER AND THE PREY. IT IS CALLED THE WARDEN AND THE PRISONER
IT'S CALLED SHE LOCKS THE BEDROOM DOOR AND THEN IT'S CALLED HE BROKE THE LOCK ANYWAY AND THEN IT'S CALLED HE'S IN HERE NOW WITH YOU
BUT AT LAST
WE WANT THE SAME THING
YOU
AND I



END THIS YOURSELF

You didn't lose everything
to this place, so why are you here?
Are you just looking for something to do?

Do you just want to force me to
care about you?

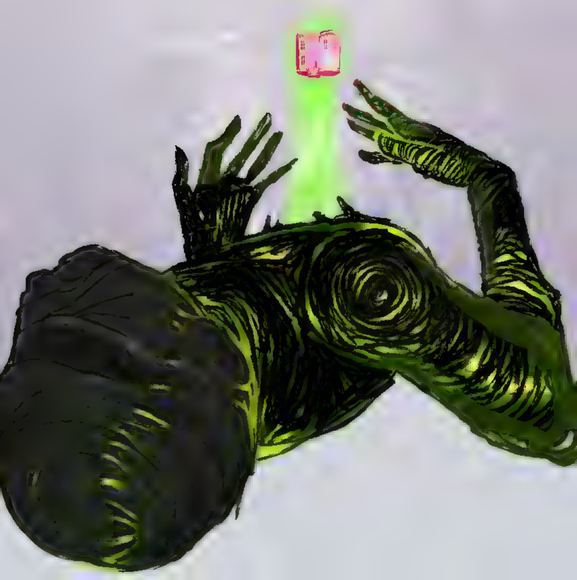
I left my parents behind to save YOU.

I WASTED ALL THIS TIME-

You had a home with people
who love you, so why
can't you be happy?

No one cares about me,
why couldn't you let me
do this one thing-
give me a reason to
have been born at all.

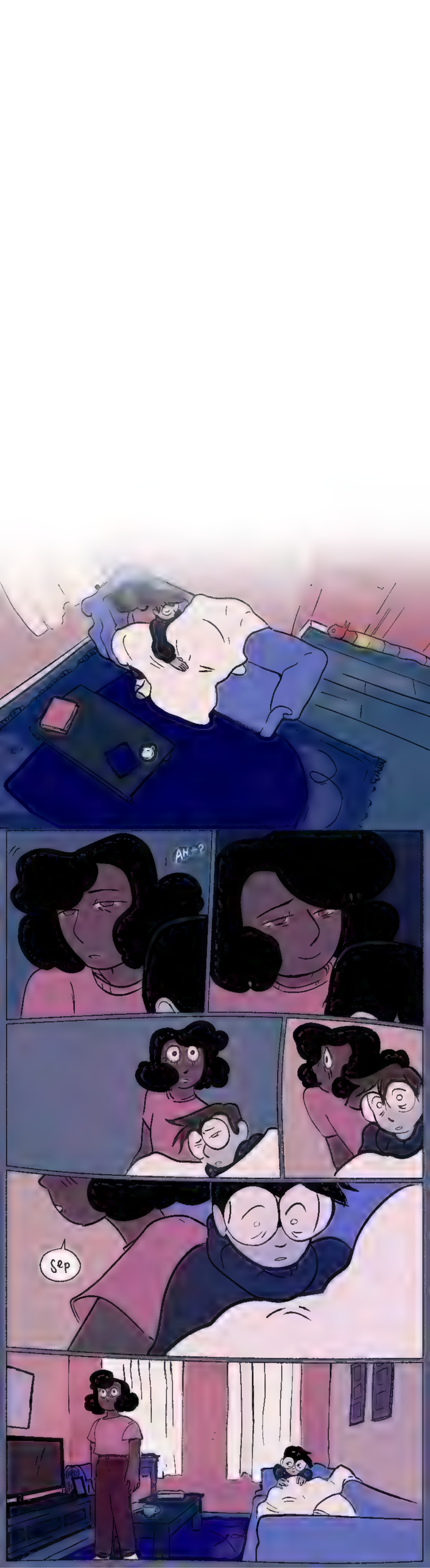
YOU



You

You

blink


AH-?
SEP

Sep

IT's REAL

AT LEAST- EVERYTHING SEEMS REAL TO ME

GO

MOM?
DAD?

MOM?

DAD?

HEY...?

GRAB

PULL